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PURSUING THE PRESIDENT

HOW THE DEMOCRATS USED THEIR OPPORTUNITY

BY GEORGE KIBBE TURNER AND ARTHUR WALLACE DUNN

CONGRESSMAN SULZER OF NEW YORK
WHO PLAYED A LEADING RÔLE IN THE TACTICS OF THE HOUSE LEADERS

To hold the last two sessions of Congress has cost the national government approximately $10,000,000; for speech-making all previous records have been surpassed; it was a 25,000,000-word session. What was accomplished by this huge expenditure of money and effort? How much better off is the country because this last Congress met at all? The answer is interesting.

NOVEMBER 8, 1910—the Day of Wrath! The solid political firmament resolved into lambent flames; Aldrich consumed; Cannon blown to pieces; Congress torn from the old control! Only one old landmark still remaining—the Presidency. Alone in the White House stood William Howard Taft—the man who accidentally set fire to the Republican party.

The Democrats, chosen agents of an angry people, moved at once to organize a House of Representatives suited to a free republic. Cannon, that violent patriarch, had been deposed forever; and the wreckage of his cunningly devised machine lay around him. No Speaker would again be given that sovereign power to appoint the House committees, and thus create a Congress after his own image.

"Legislative government," said the national Democratic platform of 1908, "becomes a failure

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when one member, in the person of the Speaker, is more powerful than the entire body." So now the Democratic membership, in free and independent caucus, would itself choose those minor bodies that really do the work and the thinking of our Congress.

The call for the first free caucus was sent forth — for January 19, 1911, in Washington. Before it came together, the new leader of the House stepped forward — a new national figure: Oscar W. Underwood of Alabama. A week before the Democratic caucus had assembled, this man was showing to his friends the names of the men whom the caucus was to choose upon the committee which would organize in its behalf the coming House of Representatives, and would

THE STANLEY
WHICH SUMMONED A SCORE OF FINANCIERS BEFORE IT, CENSURED THEODORE ROOSE-

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HENRY C. EMERY
THE COLLEGE PROFESSOR WHO WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDENT'S TARIFF BOARD

direct its great financial policies. Underwood himself was to be chairman of this body.

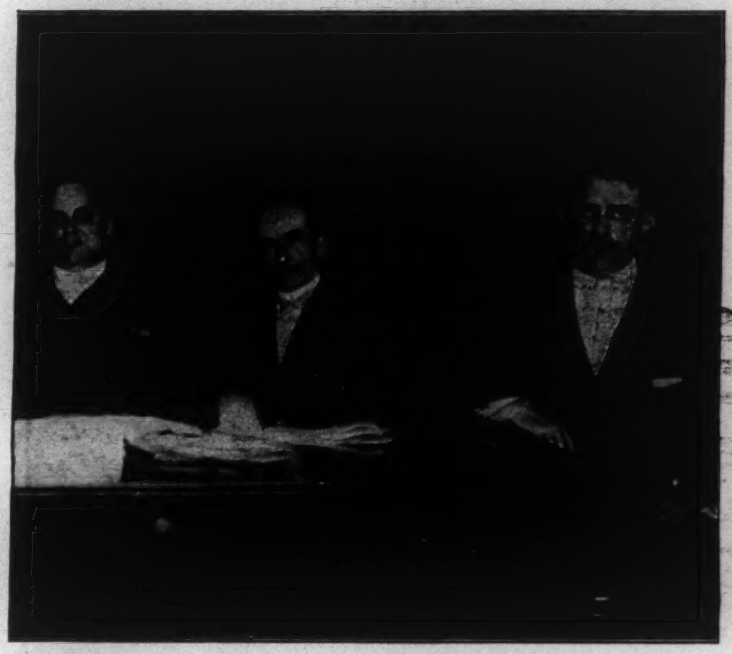
The caucus met, and followed out his prophecy exactly. Underwood was chosen head of the great Ways and Means Committee, which originates the revenue measures of the government. His list of its members was selected with him, and to the Ways and Means Committee was given the power of naming all the other committees of the House. The Speaker, as the ruling figure in the House, was dead; the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee had succeeded him.

The New Dictator

The Senate was controlled — so far as it was controlled at all — by a combination of Democratic and Republican insurgents. There was no great leader there. But the triumphant Democrats controlled the House themselves. And so one new main figure, and only one, had been projected into national life — the leader of the House of Representatives. In place of the bristling Cannon appeared Oscar W. Underwood, smiling. No change in personalities could have been more abrupt.

Smooth-voiced, well-groomed, with a sleepy, boyish smile, this Underwood had been for many years the general harmonizer of the Democrats in Congress. He was a born pleaser. In appearance, the popular young leader of a Southern cotillion; in actual age, nearly fifty; in length of service, surpassed by only nine men in the House, and by only one Democrat. He was an odd combination — a youthful veteran, a smiling dictator.

It had been a curious development of a popular political revolution, that this one man should name in advance the agents and the program of the House of Representatives. Viewed



COMMITTEE
WENT THROUGH THE AFFAIRS OF THE STEEL TRUST, VELT, AND ADJOURNED

from the same standpoint, the House committees, which he and his associates named, were just as singular. These men were veterans, too, especially the chairmen, the main figures of the committees. Nearly all of them were Southerners — Clayton of Alabama, Adamson of Georgia, Lamb, the Confederate captain from Virginia — the old type of Southern lawyer, elected for life to Congress from the solid South. Tammany Hall of New York had two chairmen —"Billy" Sulzer and John Joseph Fitzgerald, the man who deserted his own party ranks in 1910 to stand by Cannon in his death-struggle. The solid, old-time South had organized this Congress, plus the representatives of Tammany Hall. In the Speakership was exactly the same type — Champ Clark, the veteran from Missouri, like Underwood now serving his ninth term in Congress.

"This is Not Revolution"

The casual reader, picking up the new committee list, involuntarily exclaimed: "This is not revolution!" Apparently he was right. For, when you stopped and read, the House committees, generally speaking, were merely the old committees of Joe Cannon turned upside down — the Democrats on top.

The committees framed the business of the House; their chairmen dominated the caucus of the Democratic members; and every Democratic member would be bound in the casting of his vote by the decision of the caucus. The old-time Democracy had organized the new Congress. What net result could be expected?

The time of actual test arrived — April 4, 1911, the day of the assembling of the President's special Canadian reciprocity session. The tariff was the greatest Democratic issue; the Democratic representatives gathered to meet it. Democracy — the uprising of the people — advanced to carry out its purpose, led by Underwood. Alone, at the White House, without the fraction of a budging, William Howard Taft observed his party's rout.

Having set off the Payne-Aldrich tariff bill, — that explosion heard round the world, — the President sat waiting for light on tariff-making from his special tariff board. But in the meanwhile he had not rested. Conceiving the many advantages of Canadian reciprocity, he had organized his dashing attack upon the farmers, and their representatives in Congress, to obtain it. The farmers — that solid forty per cent of the voters of this country — observed this movement in amaze-

WILLIAM B. WILSON
THE "LABOR" LEADER WHO BROUGHT FORWARD LEGISLATION FOR THE UNIONS

ment; the cultivators of the Mississippi Valley and the great Northwest stood aghast.

Nevertheless, the President pushed his legislation down their throats. It was left for Underwood — the leader of a Democratic Congress— to offer the Republican farmers of the North the one substantial palliative for their injuries.

Now, theoretically, the South is the section of the tariff for revenue only. Practically, no more heroic defense is made by any section for protection of the products of the soil. No lover of the Payne-Aldrich bill can yet forget the Southern votes in Congress which kept the rates on lumber high; the fight of Louisiana for her sugar, of Texas for her hides; nor yet, pursuing principle to its last fraction, the stand of Florida

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THE "MONEY TRUST"

NONE OF THE CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATING COMMITTEES HAD POWER ATED PUBLIC INTEREST IN THEIR WORK, AND ADJOURNED.

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CONGRESSMAN PUJO

A CONSERVATIVE FROM A CONSERVATIVE STATE

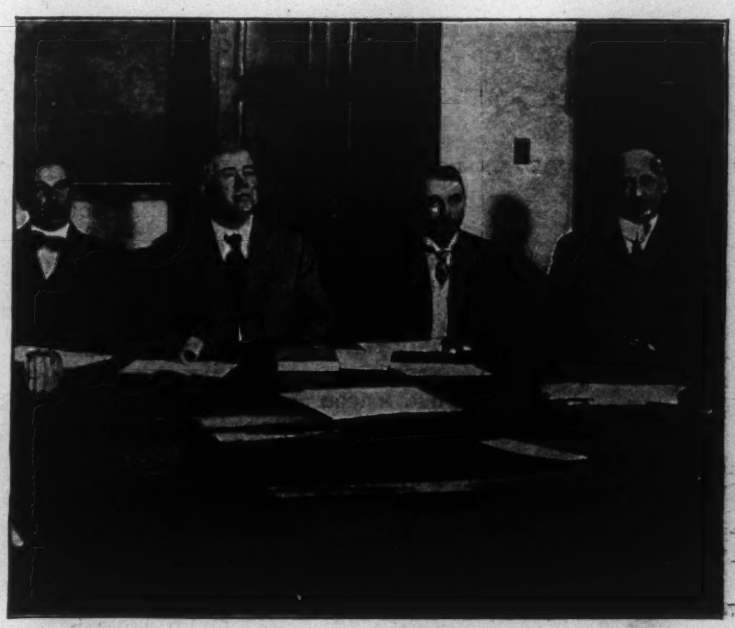
for her pineapples, of Georgia for her peanuts, or the magnificent devotion of Virginia to the sacred interests of her native quebracho.

The House Democrats had voted for Canadian reciprocity; they were really compelled to this by their public policy. Besides, the South did not raise cereals. But no one could excel the South in its devotion to a proper general tariff for the farmer. Scarcely had the reciprocity bill become a law when Underwood advanced, bearing his farmers' free-list bill. No similar instance of wholesale generosity has appeared in recent legislation. At one full, easy sweep, he offered to set free all of the instruments, and a great part of the supplies, used by this great underlying forty per cent of our voters.

The Triumph of Strategy

The Senate — controlled now, in many matters, by Democrats and the Republican revolutionists from the agricultural West — passed this bill, after the House. And only by the veto of the President did it fail of enactment into law. The solid underlying forty per cent of our voters engaged in agriculture learned this with active regret. The farmers of the Mississippi Valley and the great Northwest, stirred by this double insensibility of a Republican President to their interests, tramped up and down their borders, taking the name of Taft in vain.

The President stood firm. On this, as on everything, he announced that tariff-making would await the special information of his tariff board. The Democrats were in possession of a majority of the House, but lacked the two thirds necessary to surmount a President's veto. In the Senate the situation of the Democrats with the Republican insurgents was the same. One man, in face of all the continent, by his individual will,



INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE
TO REPORT BILLS. THEY MERELY EXAMINED MANY WITNESSES, CRE-
THIS COMMITTEE DID NOT EVEN MAKE AN INVESTIGATION

stood off all tariff legislation; defied the lightning of popular opinion. Erect he stood, and waited until the whole shock fell upon his own shoulders.

Underwood, smiling, prepared those blows; no easier or more grateful task had ever yet engaged the efforts of an experienced politician. The Democratic leader sent up to the President a new low-tariff bill on wool. He vetoed it. Underwood sent another bill on cotton. Taft vetoed that. Of all the loathed provisions in the despised Payne-Aldrich bill, these two were most frantically hated. And with them Leader Underwood closed his case.

Radicals like William Jennings Bryan called out that he should have tried for other tariff legislation which might have passed. There were tariff schedules that could be found, undoubtedly, which even Taft might well have passed on into law — a lumber tariff, for example. These were not brought up.

"Presidential Year — Nothing Must be Done"

And so the special tariff session closed — with nothing done. Canadian reciprocity, even, was dead — because of the refusal of the Canadian people to accept it. The only net result had been the increase of the bitterness of the farmer to the incumbent in the Presidency, and the resentment of the general consumer. And now the year of the presidential election approached — with the Republican party even more unpopular than it was two years before. The old-time leaders of the party left in the Senate appealed to the man in the White House for the old-time policy. "Presidential year; nothing must be done — nothing whatever! In this way no one will be offended."

But now the representatives of the people held the lower branch of Congress. The new policy of action pleasing to the people should be expected here. The Democrats, responsible, for the first time since election, for legislation affecting the general conduct of the nation, would introduce it. And immediately at the opening of the new session in December they did so — the House taking up House Bill Number 1.

CONGRESSMAN CLAYTON
ONE OF THE OLD-LINE DEMOCRATIC LEADERS
IN THE HOUSE

The Campaign of the Veterans

The great tumultuous movement of revolt in 1910 had been against the Payne-Aldrich tariff; but back of that, silent, unadvertised, but looming large for every politician in the

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CYRUS SULLOWAY

THE GIANT REPUBLICAN CHAMPION OF CIVIL WAR PENSIONS

land, had been another movement — the great campaign for the dollar-a-day pension. Exactly as the eyes of the farmer and the consumer had fixed themselves upon Taft for his tariff views, so had the eyes of the organized veterans of the country fixed themselves upon him in this matter of the pensions. In 1910 the House had passed one type of dollar-a-day pension bill; it died, strangled with technicalities, in the Republican Senate. And Taft, it was well known, had encouraged and aided its destruction.

Two thousand pensioned veterans vote, on the average, in every Congressional district in the North; in Indiana there are more than four thousand to the district. And throughout the North, especially in those States just north of the Ohio River, veterans had lately tended — stung by indifference — to turn from the Republican party, into which they had been born, to the Democratic party, which had been their old hereditary foe. The veterans held, quite clearly, enough strength to throw the election in almost any Congressional district from one party to another; and, in such States as Indiana and Ohio, there was little doubt in the minds of practical politicians that they had done so in 1910. The first insistence of the newly elected Democratic Congressmen from the Middle West had been the satisfaction of their obligations in that measure which, as a delicate recognition of the veterans' claims, had been given by a Democratic House the position of House Bill Number 1.

Cyrus Sulloway, the giant statesman from New Hampshire, had introduced and fought through, as the Republican chairman of the Committee on Invalid Pensions, the generous new pension bill of 1910 which bore his name. Twenty-eight State legislatures had indorsed it. It bore an increase of some $45,000,000 a year to the $150,000,000 annual expenditures of the national government for war pensions.

Bill Number 1 of the Democratic House was championed by General Isaac R. Sherwood of Ohio, a veteran of forty-five battles in the Civil War. It raised the Republican offer of more

pensions — according to the experts' estimates — by $30,000,000 a year, to a total additional annual expenditure of $75,000,000. The original plan of pensions, years ago, had been that veterans of the war who had been injured or incapacitated through service should be pensioned by the government. The new idea was that any man who had seen service in the Civil War should be paid a monthly stipend by the government, regardless of wounds or injury. And under this last Sherwood bill more than three quarters of the living veterans of the war would be entitled to receive their dollar a day.

The House of Representatives — Democrats and Republicans alike — flamed forth in oratory, under the stimulus of the Sherwood bill, for well toward a week — hundreds of thousands of ringing words. Sulloway and Sherwood engaged in a duel of generosity. That veteran cynic, ex-Speaker Cannon, whose district includes a soldiers' home, spoke warmly for this Democratic measure; man after man exclaimed at the contemptibility of counting the cost in such a cause; and James M. Curley, Boston's greatest Democratic orator, stated without contradiction on the floor the remarkable biological theory that the veteran was "a living flag, starred and scarred." Overwhelmingly, the House — Republicans and Democrats — voted the $75,000,000 pension increase for the Civil War veterans.

There was no stopping of the measure this time; but the influences that had killed it in 1910 modified it now. The Senate — backed quite openly by Taft — cut down the annual increase to $30,000,000, under a new bill. The veterans had lost $45,000,000 by this repression. Everywhere in the United States, the two thousand veterans in the Congressional districts, and all their friends and relatives, are remembering this, and holding in their hearts the attitude of William Howard Taft. The scar remains, as every practical politician reports in Washington.

The first great matter of national business having been taken up and so fortunately disposed of by the Democratic House, attention turned,

JOHN JOSEPH FITZGERALD
THE NEW YORKER SET TO GUARD THE NATIONAL TREASURY IN THE HOUSE

on the very next day, to the call of the Hebrew voters of New York. The treaty under which Russia was excluding Jewish citizens of the United States from the privilege of passports in that country must be abrogated.

Now, the attitude of William Howard Taft upon this matter was no more secret to any one in active Washington life than was his stand upon the tariff. In spite of heavy pressure, he had put off action looking toward this treaty's abrogation. He went even further than that — so men who claimed to know his feelings said. He stated that he could not be forced to act.

Rising in his seat, the second week in December, William Sulzer, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, opened the second program of oratory in the new session. One after another, the Democratic members arose and spoke in favor of the Hebrew race and against Russian tyranny. The Republicans looked strongly in the same direction. Even James R. Mann, the Republican House leader, recalled that his grandfather was a Hebrew, and that he was said strongly to favor him of all his ancestors. One lone dissenting voice in all the House was raised against the resolution asking that the President should abrogate the Russian treaty; 301 votes were cast for it.

All eyes were fixed again on William Howard Taft. Would he block this legislation for the Jewish race? Friends then hastened to his side and exclaimed:

"One quarter of the greatest pivotal city in the greatest pivotal State in the national election of the United States! One third of the Republican county committee of New York! Whatever may be your academic reasoning on the Russian passport situation, this much must be recognized concerning the Jews in the United States."

And so at last the Russian treaty was abrogated. The President finally had acted; but there was tempered enthusiasm over his act. A doubt remained.

Second Round of Tariff Bills

And now, a beginning having been made of the work of Congress in this full and generous fortnight, the Christmas recess came and went, and it was time to strike the scenes and set up once again the background of a tariff. The long-expected tariff board were filing back with their reports. For this official council of the administration — two college professors, the publisher of a breeders' journal, an ex-Congressman, and an ex-secretary of a Republican State committee — had examined the wool and cotton industry of the country in the preceding year, and worked out that hidden key to tariff legislation, the difference in cost of production here and abroad. The President received their work and praised it.

So Leader Underwood, smiling still, began again the introduction of more tariff bills: a wool bill, practically the same as in the year before, and well below the apparent findings of the tariff board which governed Presidential action, went in soon; a bill on steel; and one on chemicals — concerning which the President could have no opinion, not having heard yet from his board; a bill for free sugar, which in any case was destined to sure death at the hands of the administration. They passed the House; the Senate took them up, and started grinding. But nothing was more certain to every one in Washington than that they would not become laws.

A Safe, Sane Raid upon the Trusts

The tariff having now been offered up again, attention was turned to that great subject of the trusts. The plan of safely taking up the matter was somewhat different than in the various matters which preceded it, and yet it could be made absolutely safe. The year would be exhausted in investigation. This was a great problem — the gathering of information was all that could be expected in one session. And so, from the first, arrangements were made that would result in no bills being put through upon this subject.

The sugar trust investigation was given to a special committee under Congressman Hardwick of Georgia. It brought out some familiar facts, but no bill. A special investigating committee has not the power of reporting bills in Congress.

The special committee on the steel trust, under Mr. Stanley of Kentucky, haled countless magnates to Washington, held continuous space in the daily press, dwelt heavily on the contributions to Republican national campaign funds, and strongly condemned the action of Theodore Roosevelt in connection with the enlargement of the trust in 1907. But there was no legislation on the trust. The committee brought in no bill; it had no power to do so.

The plan for the investigation of the so-called "money trust" stirred the Democratic caucus to its depths. Insurgents were developing in the Democratic organization of Congress, as well as in the Republican. It was with difficulty that Leader Underwood was able to subdue the Democratic caucus and finally to refer the matter to the House Committee on Banking and Currency, headed by Mr. Pujo, the con-

servative member from that most conservative of Democratic States—Louisiana. The investigation was then put over until after next election. So here again there was no step toward action.

Never had a popular legislature, with a more determined front, made a more threatening demonstration against that general foe, Monopoly. Never had there been less danger to Conservatism.

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Capital was pleased by both parties, but not so labor. For here, again, Democracy assumed its rôle of infinite generosity, thwarted by superior force. The Democratic party, by its platforms, was committed to judicial doctrines which William Howard Taft, the jurist, was well known to abhor. A "labor group" had come into the House with the Democratic party; some dozen Congressmen had union cards, and through these, and especially their spokesman,—"Billy" Wilson of Pennsylvania,—"Sam" Gompers, head of the American Federation of Labor, pushed his program of labor legislation upon Congress. With the Republican administration he was openly out of sympathy.

Much labor legislation passed the House. An eight-hour day for government contract work went through into law. But the chief, burning issues in the campaign of organized labor—the severe check upon judicial action provided by the anti-injunction law, and the bill affording the right of trial for contempt cases arising out of labor disputes—went at once into the eternal slumber of that old "graveyard of the Senate," the judiciary committee. And labor, throughout the country, was reminded once again that the Republican party and William Taft, its ruling head, were out of sympathy with the main issues in its program.

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CHAIRMAN STANLEY OF THE STEEL INVESTIGATION, AND ANDREW CARNEGIE AS SEEN ON THE WITNESS-STAND

The policy of pleasing every voter, until repressed by the blighting hand of the hostile President and his administration, had proved successful beyond all hope. Farmers, pensioners, consumers, organized labor—one by one, the chief classes of American voters had been offered what they wanted most by Underwood, and had it snatched away by Taft or his followers. But, sooner or later, the Democrats must face another and more exacting issue—the definite and mathematical problem of economy in national affairs—so inconsistent, apparently, with a program of generosity to all.

The platform of the last Democratic national convention had taken a clear stand on this, denouncing the extravagance of the Republican "billion-dollar" Congresses. Committed by these party principles, the committees of the Democratic House went forward to their hard undertaking. The first great saving must be made in the military establishment of the United States, and, first of all, the navy.

Millions of dollars could be saved, as is well known to every one in the government at Washington, by the closing of political navy-yards which distribute government money to localities. This, however, is not a matter to be taken up in Presidential year. The Democratic policy left this form of saving severely alone. Its sav-

ing should be made by cutting off the two new battleships upon which the program of the fighting navy has been built. By doing this, the same amount of money would be distributed through the navy-yards — and in two years the United States navy would fall from third to fifth place among the nations in the number of its modern fighting-ships.

The committee on military affairs arranged its saving in a similar way. The active management of the War Department was at work blocking out a new scheme of army reorganization in which it planned to cut out the expenses of a score or more of useless local military posts and to strengthen with this saving the fighting forces of the army.

Congress, on the contrary, planned to make its saving — not in any such arbitrary withdrawals of the funds widely distributed to the local army posts. It hoped to accomplish its economy — exactly as in the navy — out of the fighting machine itself. The accumulation of military stores would be decreased; the fighting army would be reduced; great sums would be taken from the pay of the enlisted men by lengthening their terms of service, and a little army of old professional soldiers provided for the United States, instead of the army of young men hoped for by the War Department. And, as this plan conflicted violently with the idea of the active army for its own reorganization, the present active head, Chief of Staff Leonard Wood, was legislated out of office March 4, 1913. Then the President vetoed the whole bill.

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GENERAL SHERWOOD
DEMOCRATIC CHAMPION OF CIVIL WAR PENSIONS IN CONGRESS

The Daughters' Attack on Captain Lamb

The bill for the Agriculture Department could not be stinted, either — along its main lines for the service of the farmer. Year after year, especially Presidential years, it necessarily increased. There was a chance, however, in one section of this bill, the charges of the forestry division. Captain John Lamb, the Confederate soldier at the head of the agricultural committee, belonged to a period antedating the days of governmental fancies in the way of conservation. He favored sharp economy in this place; and there would have been a considerable saving here, but for the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The Daughters — in conference at Washington during the hearings on the agricultural bill — decided they would plead with Captain Lamb for forest preservation, and sent out delegates for this purpose. Entering Captain Lamb's ante-room, they were received with scant alacrity. For three quarters of an hour they sat in the outside office, until finally Captain Lamb came forth. It was one of the briefest engagements in military history. The Confederate veteran expressed shortly his feelings of an old-time ruler of a household concerning the interference of women in public life. The Daughters of the Revolution arose with warlike precision, spoke briefly of the courtesy of Captain Lamb, and left.

"You will hear from us," they stated, upon parting.

He did. In every cross-roads hamlet of Virginia a squad of Daughters of the Revolution is stationed. All were informed by letter of the conduct of Captain Lamb; all simultaneously arose and wrote to Captain Lamb.

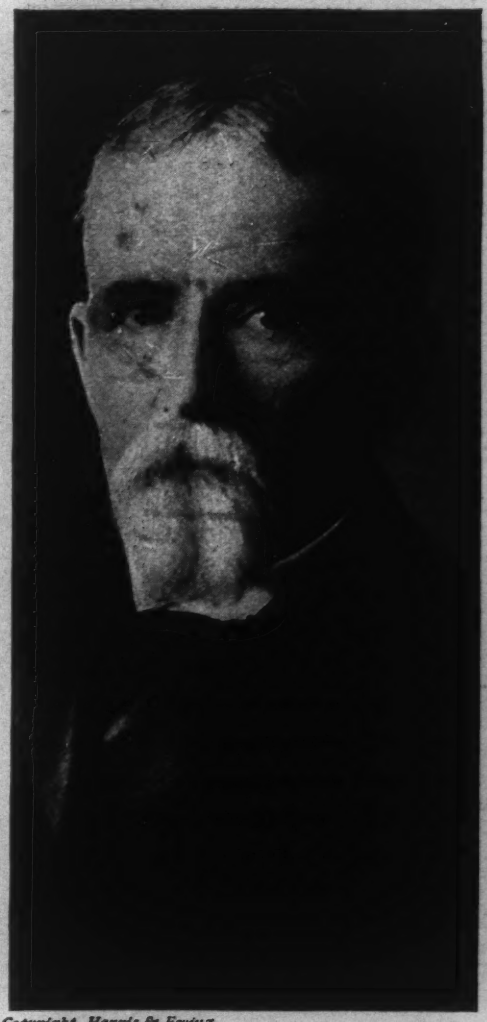
On the third day Captain Lamb was in surrender. "Call off the women!" he exclaimed, The forestry items were nearly all restored, and

the agricultural bill, fattened in its other sections, as usual, went through larger than ever.

In vain did Congressman Fitzgerald of New York, chairman of the committee on appropriations and official "watch-dog" of the Treasury, furiously object to the mounting totals. One by one, appropriation bills came in about as great as ever. The river and harbor bill took millions to the Mississippi River, and started well upon their way improvements to the Missouri which call eventually for the distribution of over $40,000,000 upon the preparation for navigation of that tortuous stream. The policy of pleasing all had reached its inevitable mathematical conclusion. There would be another billion-dollar Congress, after all.

June had come, and it was possible to secure some clear estimate of the session's net result. So far, almost nothing had been done. But never, in the history of legislation, had opinions been recorded with such fullness and abandon. The *Congressional Record* swelled beyond all precedent with political speeches. Some eighteen or twenty million words — entirely aside from the great volume of the special hearings — treated every variety of political question. Then Congress, to all intents and purposes, adjourned over the fortnight of the two national conventions, under a mutual agreement that meanwhile nothing should be done.

As the Democratic gathering was coming to a close, a sudden wave of apprehension swept over Washington and its great clerkly population. Was the United States government about to come to a standstill? The fiscal year was coming to a close June 30. The appropriations for carrying on the work ended on that day, and Congress, in its devotion to current politics, had not only not passed the annual appropriation bills as usual, but had apparently forgotten them. Government clerks were overwrought; the pension offices all over the country were being emptied of funds; and the army, whose appropriation had been too small the year before, had been out of pay money since June first. There had never been such a mess threatened since the historic time when J. Pierpont Morgan had come forward, in the Hayes administration in 1877, and cashed the pay vouchers of the army, in the absence of an army appropriation. One bank in Washington offered now to cash the pay vouchers of all government employees. Then the soothing news came — given out from the Baltimore convention — that a resolution would immediately be passed by Congress, extending the appropriations of the current year one month to August first. And the business of government went on.



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CAPTAIN LAMB
WHO UNDERWENT A SEVERE POLITICAL ASSAULT AT THE HANDS OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

William H. Taft having finally been renominated, the Democratic Congress returned to hunt him to the bitter end. He stood, back to the wall, hurling down his vetoes upon Congress. The more he hurled, the more it warmed him. Withdrawn in the White House, removed from contact with the world almost as completely as if he were in a monastery, surrounded by the half dozen people of the ninety million in the United States with whom he really associates, he had all the approval any man can have — the approval of his own conscience and of his world.

Against him the amiable Leader Underwood, and his Cabinet of old-time politicians, industriously played old-time politics with national affairs.

Two tariff bills went to Taft, on wool and

CHAMP CLARK SEES "JIM" MANN
AN INFORMAL AND WATCHFUL MEETING OF THE SPEAKER AND THE REPUBLICAN LEADER OF THE HOUSE

steel. He vetoed them, as it was certain that he would do. The House, in the absence of Republican votes, passed them over his veto; and they died in the Senate, as it was certain that they would do. A chemical tariff died in the Senate; free sugar and an excise bill died in conference between the committee of the Senate and the House; and a cotton bill, introduced at the last moment, passed on in the same way. The terms of all these bills made it mathematically certain that they would fail; and the Democrats insisted on the letter of these terms. So there was no tariff legislation in the session — exactly as both parties intended there should not be.

Playing with Appropriation Bills

The great cry for governmental economy became a death rattle as the session moved toward its close. It was the same old billion-dollar Congress. What saving did appear was largely nominal, to be made up by special deficiency bills at next winter's session. In pensions, there

will be $15,000,000 or $18,000,000 more to be provided in this way, besides the $12,000,000 already added by the new bill. In various departments, regular items which it is clearly known beforehand must be provided by the government are omitted this year in the general scheme of economy.

Other savings, as planned in the first measures of the House, came directly out of the working machinery of the government departments — out of the forces of the army, for example, and the ships of the navy. Pressure from outside eliminated much of this economy, but much of it remains. In the navy bill a rising public agitation for two ships was satisfied, at last, by one "Tillman Terror" a strange new marine monster, created especially for use at political barbecues — the greatest, grandest, swiftest battleship in the world for America.

The Navy Department has taken the appropriation and will build a ship designed to meet its present requirements, and not this freak.

Congress' Record — 25,000,000 Words

August 1 had come, and another temporary extension of the appropriations for carrying on the government while Congress talked. There now had been some twenty-one million spoken words — a record. The time dragged on; August was almost gone. Then, finally, with many struggles, the session came to a close. It had reached and passed the extraordinary limit of twenty-five million spoken words.

Nearly three quarters of a year this last twenty-five-million-word session had continued; with the special session before it, there had been over a year of solid talk. No subject of human interest had been neglected. Since the Congress opened in April, 1911, over twenty-six thousand bills had been brought into the House, and over seventy-five hundred in the Senate.

Out of all this, nearly nothing; in some things, worse than nothing. No tariff; little economy; no trust legislation; actual injury in various departments to the government machinery. A year of gorgeous and spectacular jockeying between the two old political parties for position in the campaign.

To-day the Democrats — that great party of foiled and thwarted generosity to all mankind — cry aloud from the stump to the American public to sweep away the only barrier to the people's rule by placing in their hands the Presidency — to hunt from power that most ungenerous of reactionaries, William Howard Taft.

There was no tariff legislation. Why not? The intelligent consumer knows the answer: Taft!

There was no farmers' free-list bill. Why not? The farmer knows the answer: Taft!

There was no real dollar-a-day pension bill. Why not? The veterans know the answer: Taft!

There was no fundamental legislation establishing the full legal rights of organized labor. Why not? Organized labor knows the answer: Taft!

Alone in the White House — surrounded by his few faithful servitors — William Howard Taft follows the dictates of an angry conscience and a sense of rectitude more and more inflamed. And daily he is assured by his household guard of his inevitable victory at the polls.

A PIECE OF STEEL TRUST EVIDENCE

MESSRS. LINDABURG, THE TRUST LAWYER, AND DICKINSON, THE GOVERNMENT PROSECUTOR, SEEING AN IMPORTANT DOCUMENT FOR THE FIRST TIME

WILD JUSTICE

BY

WILLIAM PATTERSON WHITE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. VAUX WILSON

I MIND that day well. 'Twas hot — blazing hot. There was a land breeze, and ye know what that means in Tripoli. I wiped my face more than once as I slanted along through the foreign section, bound for the house of Émile Gran. There was a girl standing on the street corner near the house. A dark-skinned, black-haired lass she was, with a shawl over her head. Handsome, too. I'd have given her no more than a passing look, as a man will to a pretty girl, but I caught her eyes square. Man dear! They minded me of a wild tiger's. Black and hard they were, with a bit of a light behind 'em. And they stared at me without winking. I walked on, feeling like I'd just looked down a loaded gun-barrel by mistake. Not till I got by did I take note that there'd been a look of sorrow on her face — not common sorrow, but a grief that leaves a mark.

But I'd small time to think longer of the black-haired lass, for I'd a chance at a berth at last. I'd been out of a job long enough. A café-keeper in Tripoli put me on to it. He said a man had asked him the day before if he knew of an engineer who could run a motor-boat. So the café-keeper told me, and handed over a piece of paper with Monsieur Émile Gran's address written on it. I bade him good-by and slanted away quick, I can tell you. The café-keeper had spoken of danger, and I scratched my head and thought hard as I walked along. I'd an idea it meant a job connected with the war, but just what I couldn't guess.

Ye'll mind, Italy and Turkey were scrapping at the time. Italy had landed troops in Tripoli, captured the city, and driven the Turks inland. Wherever you went in Tripoli you were running down the Italian soldiers, and offshore a line of Italian battle-ships and cruisers lay at anchor. Inside the Italian line the German cruiser *Wiesbaden* was anchored. She'd been sent to watch operations. The Italians didn't like that at all. They've small use for the Kaiser anyway, and when the *Wiesbaden* dropped her hook they fair went off their nuts. The Dago papers were full of it, and, what with calling hard names and slinging mud, matters were in a bad way between Italy and Germany. But Germany was holding off. She'd no wish

to fight. All she wanted was to see how the war was going.

I soon came to Gran's house, and as I hit the door a rap I looked back down the street. The black-haired lass was still staring, interested as could be; but she turned her head quick when I looked. A servant let me in then, and I took note he bolted the door most careful when I was inside. There was a bit of a delay, then the servant led me upstairs into a room. A large room it was, and a lad sat behind a table in the middle of it. A skinny, foxy-faced josser he was, with bright, black little eyes. His hair was black and oily, and when he opened his mouth his teeth showed bent and stumpy like a stove-in bulwark. Oh, he was a beauty, was Monsieur Émile Gran.

"You are the Englishman, Mister Allis?" said he, quick as I came in. "Sit down."

"First off, Mister," I said, "just understand I'm not English; I'm half Scotch, and don't ye forget it."

He grinned like a dredge-bucket opening out.

"So much the better," said he; "you will then be cautious as well as brave. I remember now that the café-keeper said you were Scotch. But sit down, Mister Allis, sit down. You will find that chair comfortable."

I sat, and I was surprised. He had the English fine, this one. Spoke it as good as I can myself, and that's saying a bit. And he called me Mister. D'ye mind that?

"You run a motor-boat?" he asked next.

I told him what I'd told the café-keeper, and it seemed to satisfy him, for he nodded his head and grinned pleased-like.

"Good," said he. "To business, then. But tell me, have you any objections to a little smuggling?"

"None," I said, "provided I'm paid for the risk."

"The stipulation does your caution credit. You will be paid — and well."

Émile Gran got to his feet and crossed over to close the door — the servant had left it ajar. As he went I chanced to look up. Behind the chair he'd been sitting in — his body had hidden it before — was a small square mirror. It reflected an open door on my port hand, and through the door I could see the side of a man's face. He wasn't looking at me, but he was listening all right. I could tell that, from the way he held his head. He was dark, was this josser, like Gran; but he'd a better-looking face. Young, too, he was, and his little black mustache and goatee were waxed as sharp as needles.

I took him all in; then I bent over as if to tie my shoe. I'd no wish to have him catch me staring at him. I moved my chair a bit, too, so I'd have room to turn in case the lad came through the door with a knife. Scary of me, you'll say. Right. But this was Tripoli in wartime, and I'm a great hand for taking precautions.

Émile Gran sat down and looked at me hard with his bright little eyes. He did not know I'd seen the lad in the other room; I was sure of that.

"My regular engineer was killed by a shell during the bombardment," said he. "I must have an engineer. That is necessary. So I sent for you. I am frank. Yes?"

"Go on, Mister. Where does the smuggling come in?"

"I am arriving at that, Mister Allis. At Houmt Souk there is a small cargo — a perishable, exceedingly valuable cargo. I wish to land it here in Tripoli."

"Man dear!" I almost laughed in his face. "Ye'll be forgetting the blockade! I thought you meant on the coast somewhere."

"Brave men can do much," said Émile Gran, and his mouth turned up contemptuous. "Are you afraid?"

"Go slow, Mister! Or I'll be tempted to handle you!"

I'd clean forgot the lad in the other room. I remembered him then, and I put my hand in my coat pocket and felt the butt of my gun for comfort's sake. But Émile Gran just grinned.

"No offense, no offense; I was joking. Of course, you are not afraid. Will you be engineer or not?"

"The wages, Mister, the wages. I'll not sign on till I know what I'm drawing."

"Ten pounds English for — well, not more than a week's work at the most. What do you say?"

"I'll run your motor-boat for you. Houmt Souk, you said. That'll be Jerra Island on the Gulf of Gabes."

"You are right, Mister Allis."

"When do we start?"

"To-morrow night — the exact time I shall tell you later. Come to me here this afternoon at three o'clock, and I will take you to the boat, that you may get the engine in readiness. Here are five pounds in advance. You can find your way out, I think. Don't forget — at three this afternoon."

I took the five, and slanted out and downstairs.

I'd looked over Gran's head and into the mirror as I got to my feet, but I'd seen no one. The lad in the other room had moved, and he'd moved quiet. My ears are fairish sharp, but I'd not heard a sound. Well, well, he'd meant no harm, that was certain. And 'twas none of my

affair, after all, if Gran had a dozen men watching. He'd hired me now, and could do as he liked. I jingled the five gold pieces in my pocket and thought how lucky I was. In the street I passed the black-haired lass. She looked at me hard as I walked by. But I paid no attention. I'd other things to think about, and I went to a café. No, not the one I'd been at first. The café joskin there would try to pump me, and I never lie if it can be avoided.

The black-haired lass was still standing on the street corner when I went back to Gran's house. But this time she did not look. Just as I reached the door she began to walk away slow. I was shown into the same room I'd been in that morning. Gran was not there, but the servant bade me wait, and I sat. I watched all doors careful, and ye can lay to that. The sight of that lad in the mirror had given me something to think about. There was no one in the other room now, though, for I looked.

After a bit Émile Gran came in. He was in a tearing hurry, and his bright little eyes glittered like a snake's. He bade me come along, and we slanted away for the dock where the motor-boat was moored. There was no one aboard, and Gran unlocked the engine-room and cabin doors. I took note, as I stepped over the rail, that the life-buoys were stenciled *Aries*, and no home port whatever. And that was another queer thing. I turned to in the engine-room — Gran watching me hard.

A grand craft was that motor-boat. Seventy feet over all, I judged, and built for speed. She'd Elswick engines,— two of 'em,— and Gran told me they'd develop four hundred horse. They looked it. Man dear! They were powerful beasties!

I made a careful inspection. There was naught wrong with the machinery. Even the tanks were full. The spark-plugs were clean, and all I had to do was fill the oil-cups.

"I'll be needing an assistant," I said to Gran.

"Why? Can you not run the engines alone?"

"If ye want no records broken I can, but if ye demand full speed to Jerra Island ye'll just have to give me a man. I can not run two racing engines and mind the oil too."

"I shall see what I can do. Perhaps — yes, I will get you a man. We start to-night instead of to-morrow; I have so decided. Be ready. You will find food in the galley."

Gran went on deck, and I heard him climbing up on the dock. There was naught for me to do then but sit and smoke. There was a fine little bunk in the engineer's room forrard, but 'twas too hot to lie down. I should have been quite content, with the thought of five pounds more coming at the end of the week; but I wasn't. There was something odd about the whole deal. 'Twas none of my affair, but the more I thought of it, the more I was sure there was some deviltry up. No, no, not the smuggling. That was plain every-day business, and so naught to worry about. I sucked away at my pipe, and thought hard, I can tell you.

"I'll just have to find out," I said aloud, and I looked at the after engine-room bulkhead as if I expected it to answer me. It did. The idea came to me in a flash. 'Twas most unexpected. The *Aries*' engine-room was entered from forrard. Aft of the engine-room was the cabin, and between the two was the bulkhead — solid, and no doors at all. I figured Gran might do a bit of talking in that cabin. And my idea was to bore a hole in the bulkhead.

I ran quick to the tool-chest for a brace and bit and a hand-drill. The bulkhead on the cabin side was sheathed with wood and on the other 'twas the bare iron. I looked up the dock as I went on deck. Gran wasn't in sight, and down I went into the cabin. I found a good place for my peep-hole in one corner under the angle of a shelf. I bored through the wood in a hurry, and then I picked up the hand-drill. I had a job then. I'd naught to back it save my shoulder, and that's not enough for iron. I made shift at last with an oar upended against a deck-beam.

I drove that drill all I knew. I sweated, too. Between looking through the port to see that Gran didn't come up unknown to me, and working the lever, I was nervous as a cat. The drill checked and went through at last, and I cleared out with my armful of tools. I went back and picked up all the chips and blew the filings into the crack of the carpet.

A fine little three-eighths hole I had. I looked at it from all angles in the cabin, but ye wouldn't notice it at all unless ye went looking for it. As I say, 'twas in an out-of-the-way corner under a shelf. In the engine-room it came out near a hook, and I could hang my coat on that. Oh, I was pleased with myself. I've not read detective stories for naught.

I was in the engine-room, looking through my bit of a hole and admiring what a grand brain I had, when a shadow dropped down the cabin stairs. That was odd, for I'd heard no sound on deck. I waited, and soon a foot in a stocking came in sight, then two of 'em, and the end of a woman's skirt above the ankles. Whoever she was, she moved stealthy, and with no more noise than a light-hearted cat.

"I'll just wait till I see all of her," thought I to myself.

When she did step down on the cabin floor and I saw her plain, I near jumped. 'Twas the

black-haired lass with the tiger eyes — the one I'd seen on the street corner near Gran's house!

But she'd no manner of business in that cabin, and I ran on deck in a hurry. She heard me coming, for when I started down the cabin stairs she was at the foot — waiting. There was a bit of a smile on her face, and her right hand was in the breast of her gown. The smile went quick and her hand fell away when she saw me.

"The Englishman," said she in Spanish, and her voice sounded a bit disappointed.

"I did not come here to steal." And her big black eyes looked hurt. "Truly I did not. Oh, *Señor* Englishman ——"

"I'm not! How many times must I tell you I'm half Scotch?"

"It is all the same. You are of the North, where there is great reverence for women, especially women in trouble. And I am in trouble — great trouble, *señor*."

"Best explain, then."

"This boat is going to Houmt Souk on the Island of Jerra, and I must go to Houmt Souk.

"I CAUGHT HER EYES SQUARE. . . . I WALKED ON, FEELING LIKE I'D LOOKED DOWN A LOADED GUN-BARREL"

I've shipped in more than one Spanish tramp, so I've a working knowledge of the language.

"No, *señorita*," I said, "I'm not an Englishman; I'm half Scotch. But I'm chief engineer of this hooker, so you'll just please explain what you're doing here."

She looked at me a bit, thoughtful-like, and then the light went out from behind those black eyes of hers, and they only seemed big and soft.

"You are the man," she said, "I saw go into Gran's house this morning, but I did not expect to find you in his boat. Yet it is perhaps for the best. I need help. And you will help me. I know you will."

"I've an idea you'd be helping yourself if I'd not come so unexpected."

My mother is there, and she is dying — dying, *señor*. Last week I heard of it, but I was unable to go, for there was no boat. Now there is this boat, so I came aboard in the hope that I could hide and so reach Houmt Souk. Oh, *señor*, I must go to Houmt Souk!"

And she began to cry and sniffle, and wipe her eyes with the corner of her shawl. I felt sorrow for her, and her mother too. I'd an idea she might be telling the truth. All a lass ever has to do is turn on the tears when I'm around, and I'll do all I can for her. 'Tis too soft-hearted I am, for a fact.

"What might your name be?" I asked next.

"Carmencita Alvarez," said she between sobs.

I explained best I knew to Carmencita that the *Aries* was no passenger-boat, and we just could not be bothered with a stowaway. I told her naught of the smuggling, but I said the voyage would be dangerous, and I made out the *Aries* to be no end of an unseaworthy boat and like to founder one time if a grayback hit her. But Carmencita wept some more, and spoke of her mother and all, and fair flattened my better judgment. She vowed she cared naught for danger; all she wanted was to reach Houmt Souk — and if I'd get her there she'd pray for me to her dying day.

"I'll hide you in my room," I said. "Small chance there'll be for me to sleep during the trip, so you'll be safe there."

"You will not tell the others," said Carmencita. "They might object."

"What others — Émile Gran, you mean?"

"Émile Gran, of course. Do not tell him."

"I'll not. Don't worry. I've no wish to lose my job. Another thing: how did you find out we were bound for Houmt Souk?"

"I heard."

"Who told ye?"

"I can not tell you, *señor*. I heard, that is all. Have no fear; you will not be stopped."

What she said gave me a bit to think about. The *Aries* expedition was not such a secret, after all. How many more knew of it? I'd just have to keep my eyes open, and be ready to run if the police came looking. There was no danger from Carmencita. I was sure of that. She was no spy. We'd have been nabbed before if she had been.

I took her below and put her in the engineer's room. I gave her a breaker of water and some hard bread, and told her not to worry, she'd see her mother all right. I bade her keep quiet, for any noise after Gran came aboard would make him ask questions I couldn't answer. Then I locked the door. I'd no mind to have the foxy-faced josser stick his long nose into that room. 'Twas nearing midnight when I heard steps on the dock. They sounded stealthy, and I felt for my gun. It might be beachcombers. Then I heard Gran's voice, and I held up a lantern, that he might see his way aboard.

"Put out that light!" said Gran.

I doused it, but not before I'd seen three other men following close astern of Gran. The three men stopped, and Gran came on alone.

"Go below," said Émile Gran, as he climbed over the rail. "We start at once."

I slanted away below and waited for the full ahead. I heard feet moving about on deck, and then the grind of the engine-room hatch closing. A tarpaulin was pulled over the hatch, and I knew I was in for a hot time in that engine-room. To make matters worse, Gran stuck his head in the forrard door and bade me close all ports and cover them. I did that, and swore to myself. Man dear! that engine-room was going to be one Hades, and no mistake.

After a bit Émile Gran came below and said he would attend to the oiling. I was glad of that. 'Twould be as uncomfortable for him as it would be for me. I knew 'twould be no use to kick about the hatch being closed, so I said naught. Ye'll mind that anything nefarious is best carried on in darkness.

After a bit the gong clanged for half speed, and I started the engines. We'd not made two hundred yards when — clang! the bridge called for full speed. I speeded up to the last revolution, and how those engines hummed and vibrated. The muffler was not cut out, and of course that lowered the speed a bit; but, for all that, the *Aries* was doing between twenty-four and -five knots. Gran said she could do twenty-six at a pinch.

Of a sudden the *Aries* lurched and heeled far over. Émile Gran shot head first into the oil-cans, and I hit a stanchion with a force that knocked the wind out of me.

"It is nothing," said Gran, and he scrambled to his feet. "We turn, that is all."

Well I knew the reason for that sudden turn. A patrol-boat was ahead. "Hope she don't see us," said I to myself. No shots were fired, and I breathed easier. Soon the *Aries* began to roll, and I heard the splatter of spray sweeping over the deck. The sea was calm, so I knew the man at the wheel must be hugging the shore as close as he dared, and taking all manner of chances with the surf.

The sweat fair poured off me. And no wonder. The engine-room thermometer showed 120°. It must have been a fairish bit o' Hades for Carmencita Alvarez in that little room o' mine. Émile Gran gasped and panted, but he worked. He watched the oil like a proper P. and O. oiler. I'd my hands full with the engines. I didn't dare take my eyes off them. 'Twas my first berth in a racing machine, and I wanted to make a go of it. No, no, not for Gran's sake; 'twas just my mechanical pride, that's all.

After a half hour's rolling the *Aries* began to pitch for a bit. Then she went rocking along, gentle as a perambulator. We were out in the open sea. I'd no notion of the passing of time, and I was surprised when Émile Gran looked at his watch and said: "Five o'clock. We must be nearing Houmt Souk."

We were, for a few minutes later the gong clanged for stop, then reverse, then stop. The

"MY IDEA WAS TO BORE A HOLE IN THE BULKHEAD. I FIGURED GRAN MIGHT DO A BIT OF TALKING IN THAT CABIN"

cable roared through the hawse-pipe, and I shut off. I wiped myself dry with a lump of waste before going on deck for a breath of air.

"You must stay here," said Émile Gran, guessing my intention.

"I'll not," I said. "You may be the owner, but I'm entitled to some fresh air, and I've a mind to get it."

"No," said Gran, and his eyes narrowed. "You are the engineer. You must obey my orders. You will have plenty of time for fresh air later. We will stay here all day and most of the night. I will now bring you breakfast."

He slanted away, and soon came back with coffee, dry meat, and hard bread. When he'd gone, I unlocked the door of the engineer's room

and shared the grub with Carmencita Alvarez. She'd stood the heat well, by her looks.

"Are we there?" was her first question.

"We're anchored two hundred yards offshore," I said. "But ye'll have to wait a bit before going ashore. Émile Gran says we'll not leave till long after night comes on. Can ye swim?"

"Yes," said she.

"'Tis all very simple, then. I'll get ye a lifebelt, and ye can just slip overboard during the night and swim ashore. That's the only way, *señorita*, short of telling Gran and having him put ye ashore in a boat."

"He must not know," said she — and her black eyes blazed up with that tiger light behind 'em.

"I hope you'll find your mother still alive," I said.

"Oh, I am sure I will, thanks to you and your great goodness."

"Nothing like that, *señorita*. 'Tis only what any man would do for any woman. I'll be leaving you now; Gran might come below."

I went back into the engine-room and made shift to use my peep-hole. Man dear! the first face I looked into was the face I'd seen in the mirror at Gran's house!

This lad was sitting at the end of the table in the cabin. Gran and two other lads I didn't know were sitting at the sides. They'd bottles of wine before them, and they were enjoying themselves no end. I wished for a drink myself; water does not break your thirst like wine.

The four of 'em were talking, and after I'd heard a few words I forgot all about my thirst, and the cold shivers slanted up and down my backbone three deep. My four fine gentlemen were talking of a plot to blow up the German cruiser *Wiesbaden*. They spoke French, which I've only small knowledge of, but I picked up enough to catch their drift. These were the main points: France wanted to declare war on Germany — but not till Germany was scrapping with another country. Italy was growling at Germany like a mad dog already, and a bit of a push would make them come to hand-grips. And the bit of a push was the destruction of the *Wiesbaden*. The Germans would think the Italians did it, and they'd start a turn-up one-time. The *Aries* had come to Houmt Souk to meet a French yacht and take aboard a torpedo and launching-tube. The *Wiesbaden* was to be torpedoed at night. So far as I could make out, all four jossers were French Secret Service men.

But this wasn't all. When the *Aries* had fired her torpedo, she was to be scuttled, with me locked tight in the engine-room! Saw ye ever the like? Indeed and indeed, those froggies were bloodthirsty lads.

"Yes," said Gran; "the man Allis knows nothing, but it is better that he die. What matters the death of another man? I had to kill Juan Cabral, who was engineer before him, because he learned too much."

I didn't wait to hear any more. Man dear! I was in a stew! After hearing what I had of the plot, I was not overly surprised that Gran had lied when he said the old engineer had been killed during the bombardment. A man that'll scheme to blow up a war-ship will not stop at the murder of one man. But I did not mean to be killed too — not me. I've a fine, healthy regard for my own skin.

I'd a mind to snaffle the engines proper, and then swim ashore with Carmencita Alvarez. I was not doing it for love of Germany,— I've small liking for Kaiser Bill,— but I do not care to see any man stabbed in the back. And I like the French a bit less than I do the Dutch. As ye may well believe, the froggies' little plan for my own finish helped a bit.

I ran quick with a piece of wire, and jammed the lock of the engine-room door so the key would not go in. Then I turned to with a monkey-wrench on the engines. I'd no more than taken off one nut when Gran poked his head in and wanted to know what I was doing. I told him the packing was loose in a cylinder-head, and he seemed satisfied. He came in, though, and sat, and I had to go on making repairs where none was needed. I fooled him all right, for he was no expert; but I did not dare do any damage with him watching me. No, no, I'd no fear of him trying the door of my room. He hadn't tried it before, and he wouldn't now.

But he hung to the engine-room like a barnacle to a ship's plate. All day long he stayed there. I got tired o' repairing about noon, and I knocked off. Gran only went out long enough to bring back grub for both of us. The afternoon dragged, I can tell you. Times Gran would talk and smoke, and times he'd scratch his head and grunt. 'Twas all very wearisome, and I wondered if he was going to stay in the engine-room forever. I began to misdoubt I'd have to knock him cold when it came time for Carmencita and me to leave. He'd not stop me there.

Not till after sunset, when a voice called him on deck, did Gran leave. I turned to and disconnected the feed-pipes, and ran every drop o' gasolene into the bilge. Then I took the spark-plugs and dropped 'em into the empty tanks. I let be then. I'd done enough to stop 'em for a

"'YOU KILLED MY HUSBAND, BUT YOU RECKONED WITHOUT ME!'"

bit. Once I got ashore at Houmt Souk, I'd get a cast across to Gabes, where I might be able to send a word o' warning to the Germans. As I say, I've small love for the Dutch, but I'd no wish to have a lot of 'em killed.

I unlocked Carmencita's door and told her we'd best be going. But she wouldn't go. She said 'twas not safe yet. Very nervous she acted, and she twisted her fingers in and out. I couldn't leave her, and I argued all I knew. While I was telling her what I thought of her foolishness, there came a sudden grind and scrape down the *Aries'* quarter and the slap of ropes'-ends on deck. Another vessel was making fast. Carmencita's instinct was better than my judgment, after all. I squinted through a port, but 'twas too dark to make out more than a vessel's white plates close aboard.

There was a goodish deal of noise on the *Aries'* deck. Blocks creaked, and big cases slid across the planks. Crack! Crack! and some boards splintered. The froggies were already getting out the torpedo and the launching-tube. The other vessel cast off, and I saw her lights as she steamed away in the direction of Tunis.

There was a world of jabbering going on aft, and I misdoubted the froggies were having their own troubles with the launching-tube. Here was our chance to slip overboard. I told Carmencita, and she came quick enough now. She was a bit excited, and her eyes had the wild look and light in 'em. Oh, ay, the sorrow was in her face, too.

"Has the torpedo come?" she whispered in my ear.

"What — so ye do know it all!" I said.

"Of course. Where is the torpedo?"

"Aft, likely. But what of it? You and I've no interest in torpedoes. It's ashore we want to be, and quick, too."

She made no answer, but followed me on deck quiet. I could see Gran and the froggies working on the launching-tube. They'd a dozen lanterns on top of the cabin and on the deck, so 'twas all plain. Close by the cabin was a long, slim torpedo resting on chocks. I reached to get a life-belt for Carmencita, and when I turned about the lass wasn't behind me.

I looked, and there she was creeping aft. She'd almost reached the torpedo when I saw her. I misdoubted she'd gone daft, and I started after her. Before I'd taken three steps Carmencita came into the light of the lanterns, and straightened up. Gran and his crowd didn't see her. She lifted her hand and shoved something against the torpedo. Man dear! I was paralyzed!

Carmencita had a gun in her hand, and she was holding it against the war-head. The usual bursting charge, ye'll mind, is one hundred and thirty-two pounds of gun-cotton. Things happened quick then, I can tell you. Carmencita yelled, and the froggies all turned. I can see their faces yet. Pasty white they were, and their eyes stuck out.

"Don't move!" she shouted in Spanish, "or I fire!"

Whether or no they all understood her words, I don't know, but they kept still. Her actions were enough.

"You, Émile Gran," said Carmencita next, "you killed my husband, Juan Cabral. Because he learned of your plot you killed him. You reckoned without me, his wife. I — I also knew. I could have betrayed you to the Italians, but I wanted to exact vengeance by my own hand; I wanted to destroy you even as you intended to destroy the *Wiesbaden*, and ——"

I never waited to hear more. I forgot my paralysis; and I dove overside like a shot. Down, down I went, swimming for dear life. And dear life it was. The more water there was between me and the gun-cotton, the better. There was a sudden glare above me, a heavy rumble, and the water vibrated. My head was near to bursting, and I came to the surface fast.

There was no sign of the *Aries*, but there were splashes in the water all about me as bits of her came down. A goodish piece of the stern struck within three feet of my shoulder. I swam ashore then, and the folk in Houmt Souk treated me most hospitable, as the only survivor of a boiler explosion. Oh, ay, that was the tale I told. I'd have been held for an investigation if I'd mentioned the froggies' plot and the gun-cotton.

I was lucky, but no thanks to the wife of Juan Cabral. His wife! And think of the way she took me in with her tale of a dying mother and all. She'd have blown me up with the rest if I hadn't jumped. After all I'd done for her, too! 'Twas most ungrateful. As I say, I'm too soft-hearted by half, and too ready to believe every distressful tale I hear — especially if it's told by a woman.

THE PRODIGAL

MAYOR HOWARD'S OWN STORY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAY HAMBIDGE

This is a narrative of Mr. Howard's actual personal experiences told by himself. At the age of thirty-eight he had run through a fortune of half a million. He left New York $100,000 in debt, with $25 in his pocket. For a while he drifted aimlessly about Boston. One day his eye was caught by the notice of the closing out of the Salem "Gazette." Howard's people had come from Salem. By noon that day he was in the town offering to buy the "Gazette." His offer was refused, and Howard, although penniless, started a reform paper of his own, the "Dispatch," which, by desperate expedients and by living on a few cents a day, he managed to keep going through the winter. One day some one suggested to Howard that he run for Mayor of Salem. He announced himself a candidate, put up a spirited fight, and was elected Mayor.

IT was the morning of January 3, 1910. I was about to be inaugurated Mayor of Salem. I had never been a mayor; I knew absolutely nothing about being one. And a tailor had given me my only lesson, so far. I had made a business arrangement, in the two weeks between my father's death and my inauguration, to secure a suit of clothes from a tailor — ten dollars down, twenty dollars in advertising in the *Dispatch*, and ten dollars cash on delivery. It was absolutely necessary that I have one suit of clothes to cover me; I ordered a frock-coat and trousers. "It's the statesman's coat," my opponent, John F. Hurley, had told me while we stumped together in the campaign. "They all wear 'em."

"Well," said the tailor conversationally, reaching his tape to measure around my waist, "I suppose you ordered your silk hat."

"What silk hat?" I said.

The tailor stood back and examined my face. "The Mayor's hat," he said. "Didn't you know?"

"Know what?" I said.

"It is customary," said my tailor, "for the Mayor of Salem always to appear in a silk hat."

He was right. I have seen their pictures since — in top-hats, and stovepipes, and hairy beavers — reaching back through dim time to the beginning of the city of Salem in 1836. Not one of them for one moment had passed under the open sky without this badge of office.

I learned this with regret. My silk hat was a wreck. It was a financial strain to secure that frock-coat; here was another and unexpected investment. However, I went to Boston and secured a hat, to be delivered "C. O. D." the morning of inauguration. And now I sat waiting. I had successfully borrowed the $17.50 necessary to insure delivery of my robes of office; but I was full of anxiety as to the next step in becoming Mayor of Salem.

The carriage came at last; I stepped in, drove to the City Hall, and called for my predecessor, the genial ex-illegal liquor-dealer, John F. Hurley. The streets were thronged. We passed — lifting and relifting our gleaming hats — through the city, out into the bare pasture lots, where the city government had built the new high school. And there they gave the oath of office to the new city government and the Mayor.

I arose and gave my inaugural address, telling what I hoped to do as Mayor.

No one knew but myself how inexperienced I was. Not only had I never presided at a meeting of this kind: I had never seen a meeting of a board of aldermen. Curtis had always done that end of the reporting for the newspaper.

I Become Chief of Police

And now I was called upon to preside — before an audience of two thousand people — over the first meeting of my aldermen. I hesitate now to think what would have happened to me if I had been alone. But there arose and stood at my right hand the city clerk of Salem.

He was a man of sixty — the city clerk of Salem. In his younger days he had been a sea captain; and now for twelve years he had been commander of the city government meetings. This was nothing new to him; he prompted me, as he had my predecessors, in exactly what to do. He was a part of the old political "gang." Personally, he hated me so much that he refused to

HOWARD EXPLAINS TO THE BEWILDERED ALDERMAN THAT, AS HE HAS APPOINTED HIMSELF CHIEF OF POLICE, THE ONLY WAY IN WHICH HE CAN BE ARRESTED WILL BE FOR HIM TO ARREST HIMSELF

ride in the same carriage with me to my inauguration. Officially, I was the sacred head of the city of Salem.

The routine business came and was done, and all at once my first official crisis rose before me. The Chief of Police — the sleepy guardian of the moving-picture shows whom we had attacked in the *Dispatch* — had resigned.

Immediately I stood face to face with my iron-countenanced enemy, Alderman Doyle — the man who was suing me for libel.

"Mr. Mayor," he said curtly, "this city

HOWARD BECOMES SALEM'S "DANCING MAYOR," AND LEADS THE GRAND MARCH EVERY NIGHT AT THE TOWN ACADEMY. A NEW DANCE IS INVENTED AND NAMED AFTER HIM—THE "HOWARD"—WHICH BECOMES EXCESSIVELY POPULAR

should not be without a chief of police. Has your honor decided upon whom he will appoint?"

I had not, and he knew it.

I smiled pleasantly at Alderman Doyle, signed some orders which had just been passed, and thought industriously.

"Do I understand, sir," insisted Doyle, "that you have selected a man?"

"Yes," I replied, standing up; "I appoint myself — Arthur Howard — Chief of Police for three weeks."

Then the audience broke loose. It was a big

audience, for Salem — two thousand people. They had been looking for a change, a sensation, some overthrow of tradition by the new Mayor from New York. This must be it.

I stopped speaking and gazed at my seven aldermen, seated before me: Doyle, like a big, grim, round-headed prize-fighter, with his hostile eyes upon me; the four good government aldermen, sitting back with the expression of conscious rectitude usually worn by reform officials; the political coal-dealer, Colbert, from whom so many of the city employees bought their coal; and "Jackie," the slater, the friend of all the people, round as a rubber ball, rolling to and fro in his chair, agonized under the cruel necessity of a collar.

It was a strangely assorted crowd, divided among themselves — four to three — between the old and the new purer politics; united only on one issue — their opposition to me.

The aldermen turned, twisted and looked at each other, nervous and disquieted. I stood and faced them — uncertain as to what came next. The old city clerk never flinched; stiff and serious, he stood beside me, whispering in my ear.

"The question comes on confirmation of the appointment of Arthur Howard, Chief of Police for three weeks."

"The question comes," I echoed feebly, "on confirmation of the appointment of Arthur Howard, Chief of Police for three weeks."

One by one the clerk called out their names; one by one they responded, "Aye." The applause of the audience had carried them with it.

With that the meeting was adjourned. It was two hours after my inauguration. I was not only Mayor of Salem; I was Chief of Police. And as yet I knew nothing about being either.

We left the high school then, the ex-Mayor and myself, and drove back, bowing, to the gray old City Hall — my seat of office.

"It Is Customary"

I waved official good-by to my predecessor,— he was, I think, the greatest hand-waver Salem ever saw,— entered the gloomy corridor, and passed upstairs. The low talk of the watching officials came to me from the offices on either side. The scent of stale official tobacco smoke pursued me to my door.

I entered, sat down, and pressed the button at my desk. Minutes passed — a long wait. Then, clip-clap, clip-clap — the sound of a wooden leg upon the stairs. The city messenger of Salem — the one-legged veteran of Gettysburg, who was official message carrier of the city government — stood beside me. I had begun my active service as the Mayor of Salem.

It was a long, confused, and busy day. Citizens, officials, office-seekers trooped in and out in hordes. I had been widely advertised during my campaign. I was a State-wide curiosity—the Boy Mayor of Salem. Locally — taken at my own word — I was the people's candidate; so it was my especial business to meet the people.

That evening the aldermen and councilmen met again for routine matters of appointment. The upper board and I sat down together again — the four good government aldermen fanning themselves. It was the dead of winter; that made no difference — something in their conception of official life led them always to fan themselves when in session. "Jackie," the slater (he always spoke of himself as Jackie), freed from the unnatural device of a collar, beamed with general good will to man. The evening session was tedious. The Common Council could not agree upon an election. Finally I adjourned our meeting and went home.

"It certainly has been a long day," I said to myself, as I turned over wearily to sleep. And then the telephone bell rang.

The grieved and excited voice of the veteran messenger was on the wire.

"Come back to City Hall," he cried. "The Common Council can't adjourn!"

"Why not?" said I.

"The aldermen did not notify them they had adjourned; they've got to meet again and adjourn properly."

"There's no rule to that effect."

"It's customary," he said, and rang off.

I called up central. "Disconnect me for the night," I said, rolled over, and went to sleep.

"Customary"! I could never get the word out of my ears.

I had scarcely been asleep, it seemed, when all at once the telephone bell was ringing. I started up. It was half past six in the morning.

"What is it?" I said.

"Is this the Mayor?"

"Yes!"

"Shall we have school?"

"Why not?"

"It's raining."

"What of it?"

"It is customary," said the voice grievedly, "for the Mayor to decide."

I got up and looked out; it was pouring. "No school," I said.

Soon after the fire bell was ringing out, "No morning session." I had learned another duty of the Mayor.

As I lay there before dressing, I began to realize what it meant to be Mayor of Salem. I was paid $1500 a year; apparently there was no hour, night or day, when I was not at work. But

HOUNDED BY HIS CREDITORS, AND ON THE EVE OF BANKRUPTCY, HOWARD TAKES THE NIGHT TRAIN TO NEW YORK, GOES TO HIS SAFE-DEPOSIT BOX, AND DESTROYS $80,000 WORTH OF UNCOLLECTABLE PERSONAL NOTES AGAINST HIS FRIENDS

yet I had no realization of what was before me; it was only this second day I began to know.

I arrived at the City Hall that morning at nine o'clock; and as I came in, the city messenger met me.

"Mr. Brown is dead," he said.

I expressed my regret, although I did not know Mr. Brown.

"What shall I do?" said the messenger, lingering.

"I don't know, I'm sure," I said.

"It's up to you," he answered.

"What?" I asked.

"I must have my instructions whether the City Hall flag shall go at half mast or not."

"Who was Mr. Brown?"

"He was a member of the Common Council in 1879," said the messenger.

"Is it customary?" I said, anticipating him.

"Yes, sir."

"Put the flag at half mast," I said.

"Shall I," said the messenger, waiting,—"shall I accompany you to the funeral?"

"Do I go?" I asked.

"It is customary," said the official. "It is considered a part of the duties of the Mayor."

"I will be there," I said. I was — and at scores of funerals thereafter. It was a leading duty of the Mayor of Salem.

And now the day began — a specimen day. At nine o'clock we had a meeting of the executive committee of the school board. The funeral was at one-thirty. The Sewer Commission met at four, the Trust Fund Commission at five, the Park Commissioners at five-thirty, the Committee on Police and Licenses and the Firemen Committee at seven-thirty.

I met scores of callers; they took the whole afternoon.

At eight I spoke to the Men's Club of St. Peter's Church; and fifteen minutes later the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians had me. At eight-thirty I was with the Street Committee; at nine o'clock I led the grand march of the Loyal Order of Moose. From nine to eleven I was grinding through the mounds of mail upon my desk, and never done with it.

Must I Arrest Myself?

In less than a week I knew it would be impossible to catch up with my work; but by that time my mind was occupied with something else. My old enemies were after me again. One morning the *News* appeared with big headlines:

MAYOR TO BE ARRESTED

I cast my eye over it. I had failed, it said, to file my election expenses, as required by the law. That was true. Neither had any of the other candidates filed election expenses; that matter, however, was not discussed. Each day a new "scare-head" appeared:

MAYOR'S ARREST TO COME SOON!

I waited — purposely, to see what would happen. On the second afternoon a representative of the good government aldermen appeared, seated himself sadly by my desk, and seized a fan. (I had provided fans for their accommodation when calling on me.)

"Mr. Mayor," he said, fanning himself in an agitated manner, "your administration is under attack."

"Yes," I said.

"Your neglect to file election expenses is causing a scandal."

"Have you filed yours?" I asked.

"No, sir, I have not," he said heavily. "But the case of the Mayor is different; he is the head of the administration."

I sat for a moment and looked at him. There was not the slightest concession from the nobility of self-righteousness of his face — not even when his own case was considered.

"What shall I do?" I said at last. "Shall I instruct the Chief of Police to act?"

The fan stopped — in dazed speculation.

"But see the difficulty," I went on, wheeling in my chair. "It is very embarrassing.

"You see," I whispered, "I am Chief of Police.

"Suppose, for example," I said, "that I, as Mayor, order the Chief of Police to arrest Arthur Howard for breaking the law. The Chief of Police would then find that this same Arthur Howard was Mayor of Salem. Now, being Mayor of Salem, he would then be compelled to discharge the Chief of Police for insubordination. That would be impossible."

The delegate of the reform aldermen arose and tramped hurriedly from the room, carrying my fan with him. I was sorry for this, for I had marked on all my fans, in self-protection: "Stolen from the Mayor's Office."

A few days later I filed my election expenses — which was more than my visitor did. And my enemies started working upon a new trail.

Advice from the Governor

The matter of Salem customs still worried me, and also my lack of knowledge of what a Mayor should do. And so I was glad, a few days after my inauguration, to have the opportunity of laying the matter before the Governor of the State — Eben S. Draper.

Mr. Draper received me very kindly, and gave me some most excellent advice. I liked it so much that I followed it. I also copied his stationery. I had a die struck off with the seal of Salem and "Office of the Executive" at its head. It was magnificent. I learned afterward that the Governor had copied his from the stationery of the President.

In London, I remembered, the newspapers had always printed every day a column headed "Court News," telling of the daily movements of the King: "His Majesty at nine o'clock received the Earl of Beaconsfield; at eleven," etc.

So I instituted in the *Dispatch* a column which I headed, "With the Mayor," in which I gave my movements of the day before and my engagements for the coming day.

I had added my part to the customs of Salem. But formalities were not the main thing I introduced; there were far more informalities. I was pledged to be Mayor of the people, and I stood to my pledge.

On my first day I made this rule: I will speak to every man and child I meet on the street. I kept the rule throughout my administration. I could not speak to the women, of course. It would have been considered an impertinence. But I bowed to every man, whether I had ever seen him before or not.

For the children, I used to start out every morning with some two dollars in pennies and nickels in my pocket. I still have children stop me in the street to remind me of the time I treated them to soda-water.

All this cost money — money that I did not have. The *Dispatch* was running along under the charge of an assistant, and, as usual, it was not much more than paying expenses — though for a while, at the opening of my term, there was an almost suspicious increase in its advertising. But apparently my actions did not encourage this, and advertisers soon dropped off again.

"The Mayor Must be Arrested"

In the meanwhile, I found that being Mayor was very expensive. My board of aldermen was extremely strict on my bills. Funerals, public functions, and receiving visitors from out of town were the recognized business of the Mayor; and yet, the city would not pay the cost of it, not even of carriage hire. I had to take it from my own pocket. Being Mayor was costing me twice as much as I got for it.

I was waiting anxiously for the day my first month's salary was to be paid. Then suddenly my salary was attached. The gang had caught up with me again.

I had owed "Ma," my first landlady, ninety dollars for board when I left her nine months before; with some difficulty I had reduced the sum to twenty-eight dollars, and she was not pushing the claims. But now, all at once, Billy, the lawyer of the McSweeney Brothers combination, appeared and attached my salary in her behalf. It was a hard blow to me, under existing circumstances. And, as it was very clearly another political trick of the gang, and it was impossible to tell when they would repeat it, I simply assigned my salary as Mayor for the remainder of the year.

I had scarcely passed the assignment into the city clerk's office when I received a sudden shock. I heard that I was no longer Mayor. The law, I was informed, specified that if any city official assigned his salary, his office immediately became vacant. I stepped at once into the city clerk's room. The clerk had not been in. I took my paper and went out again, and destroyed it.

The next morning the *News* was out once more screaming:

MAYOR MUST BE ARRESTED

I had destroyed public records, it appeared; I must be sent to jail.

It was fortunate, I again assured my anxious visitors, that I was Chief of Police. I could at least delay arresting myself. And, as careful reading of the law showed that I was technically not a city official, but the city executive, I again filed the assignment in the city clerk's office, and for a time the announcement of my approaching arrest disappeared from the first page of the *News*.

The Uprising of the "Barnacles"

And now I was compelled to devote my attention to a new matter — to quell the uprising of the "Barnacles."

My predecessor — John F. Hurley — had named them that. He had made a campaign several years before on the issue of cleaning the City Hall of its Barnacles. It was a vain boast; he was elected, but he could not scrape them off.

They were very old,— the permanent officials of City Hall,— nearly all of them between sixty and seventy. A majority of them had been soldiers in the Civil War.

Every morning they met in the city messenger's room. The one-legged messenger, seventy years old, sat dozing there all day over his cigar. (Messages were delivered to his assistant.)

THE FIRE CHIEF HAS A GRUDGE AGAINST HOWARD. AN OPPORTUNITY COMES FOR REVENGE. IN SIGHT OF TWO THOUSAND SPECTATORS, THE HOSE IS TURNED UPON THE MAYOR

Around him was a circle of chairs. It was the general place of rest for the officials of City Hall, and politicians in general.

Every morning the recognized wit of City Hall, Tax-Collector Quinn,— one of two or three officials under fifty in the building,— took his position there, and greeted them as they came in.

"Good morning, war veterans. How are we this morning? Shall we be able to hold our jobs another week?"

"Charlie," he would say to the dozing mes-

PLEDGED TO BE THE MAYOR OF THE PEOPLE, HOWARD MAKES IT A RULE TO SPEAK TO ALL THE CHILDREN IN TOWN. AS THEIR ACQUAINTANCE RIPENS, IT LEADS TO THE SODA-WATER FOUNTAIN

senger, "tell us how it was you lost your leg. Come on, do; that leg's a very important thing for us. I know you all say you were in the Civil War. But how do we know? How does any one know? But Charlie, here, he can prove it by the leg. Can't you, Charlie?"

No one would be allowed to talk that way except the licensed jester of the establishment. The power of the old men was too great. In a very short time I was made to feel it. The Barnacles were in general revolt.

I had caused disturbance immediately after

taking office. The old men all smoked, or nearly all; and citizens, women especially, complained that the old, ill-ventilated offices were always choking with tobacco. It was the smoke of pipes, very often, or the powerful scent of political cigars. I issued orders immediately that smoking in the public offices should be discontinued. There was protesting obedience.

The city messenger's room was at the bottom of the stair-well, on the first floor, below my office. The officials, ex-officials, and defeated politicians gathered there for critical discussion. It lay in the very center of the hall, smoking like the pit, exploding with oaths like the forecastle of a pirate ship.

The very first day, I had overheard a concise opinion of my administration come forth:

"What this feller, this year, ought to do, is to take two vacations — two vacations of six months each."

However, that was only the beginning. My first encounter was with the auditor, an excellent old accountant who had been in the office about nine years. As soon as I took office, he presented the warrant for the last month's expenses — a single warrant covering both city bills and pay-rolls.

"Will you separate them, please?" I said. "Then I can sign the pay-roll, and have a chance to look over the other."

"It's customary," said the auditor, bristling, "to sign one warrant." He was a very serious man.

I smiled sadly at him. "You see," I said, "this is my first day in office, and so I want to sign my name as many times as possible."

Soon after, a disturbed and melancholy rumble came floating up from the messenger's room. They were talking it over.

My next encounter came with the aged veteran who was city treasurer.

"How much of a balance has the city?" I asked him as he came in.

"Two hundred thousand dollars," he said.

"Where is it deposited?"

He told me. It was all in one bank. "I wish," I said, "you would divide it among all the banks."

"It's customary," said the treasurer, "to keep it in one bank."

"That must be an excellent thing for the one bank," I said.

He went away. A few days after, I called up a bank. The money had not been distributed. I called the aged treasurer again — several times before he came.

He arrived at last — livid.

"For fifteen years," he said, "I have been treasurer of Salem. No one has ever questioned my honesty before."

"Nobody questions it now," I said.

He trembled in all his limbs.

"The *Dispatch*," he said, "is a disreputable sheet. I have forbidden my family reading it."

"What has that to do with distributing the city's money?" I asked.

"I don't see how it can be done," he said. "It would involve having four check-books and four accounts."

"We have," I said, smiling pleasantly, "a number of very bright pupils in the high school. If you wish, I will send up for one of them to show you how money can be drawn from one bank and put into another."

The treasurer rushed to the door, slammed it behind him, and never spoke to me again while I was Mayor. Since that time, however, the city's money has always been divided equally among the banks of Salem.

All this was viewed with alarm by the assembly in the city messenger's room. Their comments floated loudly out of the pall of smoke, through the corridors:

"That may be the way they do it in New York. But it won't do for Salem. You wait; wait till the Captain [the city clerk] gets after him. He'll show him!"

The city clerk and I soon arrived at odds — over an order of mine, which he saw but to disregard. He immediately burst into my office, and began where the treasurer had left off. He knew my New York record, he said. It was a terrible thing. My newspaper was a disgrace to Salem. He raved, and stamped about the place.

I smiled.

When he was done, I said to him in my most agreeable manner:

"That is very interesting, Captain. I have been very much entertained. I hope you will come up again sometime and tell it to me all over again."

The city clerk burst into tears and left the room.

The city messenger's room groaned and rumbled like a volcano before eruption:

"Well, what do you think of that? The Captain has been up and given him a piece of his mind. And he asked him if he wouldn't come up again and tell it all over to him!"

It was curious that they could never get used to ridicule. It had been, from the time I had come to Salem, my only weapon against the gang. It was the same when I was Mayor. My only weapon against the solid front against me was reducing ridiculous and often vicious methods to absurdity.

The Sudden Dash of Cold Water

But vengeance was at hand, and that right soon.

I discovered, among other things, that the various departments had bought their supplies without regard to cheapness or quality. It was "customary."

I made attempts to change the system. The matter of buying hay, in particular, I decided to take care of myself. There was a good deal of it used, and the prices, I found, ran from twenty to over twenty-eight dollars a ton for the same thing.

Here and in one or two other matters I came in conflict with the Chief of the Fire Department. He argued. I refused.

I had been Mayor only a few days when I learned another very serious duty of the Mayor of Salem. He must answer all "second alarms" for fire. This is because no one but the Mayor can call for fire assistance from out of town. In case of danger he must be ready.

My first "second alarm" was for a fire in the cellar of a big lodging-house. It was a very smoky fire. The chief solicitously took me into the cellar to see it at close quarters. I went down into that cellar without enthusiasm, and saw, with him, the center of the blaze. I did not see how I could refuse.

My second attendance at a second-alarm fire was at a blaze in a factory building. The chief soon discovered me there. "Mr. Mayor, this way, please," he cried officiously. "I want to show you how we fight the fire."

There was a low building in front of the smoking factory. I climbed up after him, and he placed me in a conspicuous place on the flat roof. A couple of thousand spectators were looking at the blaze.

I turned to speak. The fire chief had gone. And, almost at the same moment, the stream from the hose took me — one full blast at first, then, carefully squashed against the edge of the roof, the water spread into an almost solid shower. In my official robes of office — my silk hat and frock-coat — I was being bathed before the populace. A loud yell went up. I crawled down the ladder, went home, and stayed in bed until the official suit and hat were dry again.

Weeks afterward I advanced a man in the fire department. He thanked me, almost in tears. I asked him why. "I didn't think you'd do it," he said. "I was the man that the chief had turn the hose on you."

I couldn't prove anything, of course; ostensibly it was an accident.

However, I continued to buy the hay for the fire department. It cost me twenty-two dollars a ton. Under the old "custom" the price was twenty-eight dollars. Altogether we saved thousands of dollars in the purchase of city supplies.

I went on, as best I could, trying to keep up with the job of being Mayor of Salem. I was busy every hour of the night and day. If it was not city business, it was something almost as exacting — the expected speeches after dinner at banquets and appearance at public entertainments and balls. Every night of my life I danced, somewhere.

My callers never ended. One man regularly occupied an hour of my day, giving his views on the railroad grade-crossing subject; another periodically delivered a sixteen-page letter on city sewers; and aldermen came and sat hours with me, on matters of no tremendous import.

There was Jackie Cahill's collar, for instance. The reform aldermen were much exercised over it, and finally one of them called on me to take action on it.

"Would it not be advisable for you, Mr. Mayor," he said, grasping his fan, "to — er — to ask him to wear a collar? We all must feel that he detracts from the dignity of the body."

I suggested that he bring in an order asking Mr. Cahill to put on a collar; but he did not do so.

And for the first three weeks, added to my own duties as Mayor, I had those of Chief of Police. There was, of course, an assistant Chief, but he was nearly eighty years old. There had been a good deal of criticism of the police. They were good men, a large majority of them. But they were so aged. Forty per cent of them were over sixty; three of them were nearly eighty. One of these three, who was on duty at the police station, was brought down every evening, and was put to bed for the night in the station-house. It was a manner of police service I have never seen outside of Salem.

I was very anxious to solve the police problem right. The city had been run pretty loosely. There were rough, "fresh" boys on the main corners, and a great deal of drunkenness in the street. I went down quite often and spoke to the officers at evening roll-call on their duty, and finally, after some disagreement with the aldermen, a few weeks after my inauguration, I got a Chief of Police. He was from out of town,— from Lowell,— a rugged, heavy-footed man, with an enormous gray mustache — on account of which he was immediately nicknamed the "Walrus." He was about sixty-five, and was recommended as a man of great experience; apparently he was a man of decided opinions.

"I know the law," he stated frequently, and without apparent fear of contradiction.

Although he was my second choice, I felt relieved. I had secured a perfectly honest, tremendously serious-minded man to take care of Salem. His entry was most propitious. Hoodlums and street ruffians were clearly awed by his appearance. I helped by playing him up, in the *Dispatch*, as a perfect ogre of virtue.

For several weeks I was free from overwhelming anxiety. Then, in the first of March, the gang was on me again. I heard them coming several days before they arrived. The streets were full of rumor:

"Well, they've got him this time."

Very soon the secret was out. I was sued by three separate lawyers for judgments which had been returned against me for my debts in New York. What had happened was common knowledge. Some of my enemies had made a pool and bought them up.

Foolishly I let their court proceedings go by default; I knew nothing about the Massachusetts law. The next day, the headlines of the *News* revealed my situation:

MAYOR MUST TAKE POOR DEBTOR'S OATH

Then I went to Boston and saw my friend and lawyer, Frederick W. Peabody. The Massachusetts law, he told me, gave creditors some remarkable privileges in case a man goes into court and swears himself to be utterly without property. After that his creditors, if they wish, can hale him into court once a week, if they desire, and make him give an accounting of every cent he gets and every cent he spends. If he refuses — or even makes an error in his accounting — he can be ordered to jail.

"If you take the poor debtor's oath," said Mr. Peabody, "they've got you on that. It isn't usual, but those men would probably make your life unbearable. Very likely they'd get you in jail."

There were three days before I was to appear. I took a train to New York that night, went to my safe-deposit box, and destroyed the old personal notes I held against friends. They were uncollectible anyway; they would only cause their makers trouble, without any advantage to any one. But I had food for thought when I totaled them. There were $80,000 in old notes there which I destroyed — all outlawed by time. That had been real money in my hands once.

Then I returned to Salem, and went into bankruptcy under the United States laws — as I should have done long before had I not hoped that sooner or later I could settle.

Liquor and the Best Citizens

I had scarcely emerged from this trouble when I was in conflict with the better classes of Salem, through the old Salem question — the sale of liquor at the Salem Club, the social gathering-place of the aristocrats.

I had a great deal of trouble with the liquor law, as every administration always had had. There were a number of men who were suspected of breaking the laws. I warned several of them. Every time I did so, they would laugh and say: "I suppose the Salem Club will serve as usual."

I spoke of this to my friends, and told them I was going to stop the liquor-selling there. "Forget it," they said promptly. Then they told me to see Knight, the only Chief of Police who had raided the Salem Club.

"They'll ruin you," Knight told me. "They'll drive you out of business, and socially you'll be dead forever. They ruined me, all right; they never left me alone afterward. And what did I accomplish?" he continued sadly. "They adjourned the case a dozen times, and then they returned the seven hundred dollars' worth of liquor I found there back to the club again."

"I'm going to try it, just the same," I said.

I walked down to the Salem Club, rang the bell, and asked for the club president. He was one of the best known and most respected men in Salem.

"Mr. President," I said to him, "I have come here, in my capacity of Mayor of Salem, to tell you that you must stop the sale of liquor in this club. I dislike very much to come here on this errand, but I must treat everybody alike.

"I am not going to raid your club, Mr. President. I merely want your personal word that no more liquor shall be served here until it is legal to do so."

He held out his hand at once, and gave me his word — which he kept religiously.

But there was no doubt that there was feeling; I was told of it constantly, and I felt the enmity of the aristocracy immediately. They snubbed me at every possible opportunity, especially at the social functions which I had to attend.

Unfortunately, this was only a part of the trouble I was to have over the interest of the "better citizens" of Salem in liquor-selling. There was one place which was notorious for its illegal sales of liquor. It was called the Colonial House. More than twelve hundred letters complaining of it came to me. I satisfied myself that the complaints were true, and made up my mind that I would take action.

I had scarcely announced what I intended to

do than I was besieged with mysterious callers informing me that the leading secret society of Salem owned the building, and that the hotel proprietor was "back in his rent." It would mean a loss to an association of the very best citizens of Salem.

I went ahead and preferred charges to the license board. The evidence was very clear; there was practically no defense. The board voted, two to one, not to discontinue the license.

The Colonial House went on — more defiantly than ever. I investigated again personally, and found the situation was unchanged. Then I preferred charges against two of the license commissioners for continued neglect of duty. My hearing on the charges was a civic holiday in Salem. Seats in City Hall were unobtainable to a quarter of those who wanted to attend.

The two license commissioners refused to answer any questions concerning my charges against them. Their whole effort was summed up in the personal attack of their lawyer upon me — my debts in New York, my poverty, and my libel suits. The defense of his clients was a minor matter.

I adjourned the meeting. Two days later I removed the commissioners. My own lawyers' bills for presenting the case amounted to two hundred and fifty dollars, which, as usual, I had to pay out of my own pocket.

It was growing monotonous. I was constantly on trial, especially whenever I attempted any change or reform. Sometimes it even strained my sense of humor. No doubt the solemnity of the performance led me to extravagances that I might have avoided. But there was nothing I could do except reduce the various situations to absurdity and laugh them to death. It was my only weapon.

A Veto and Some Circus Tickets

There was a police inspector, Lehan, whom I distrusted. A recommendation came in to the aldermen, signed by him, and I said that I had no confidence in what he said. At the next meeting of the board he suddenly appeared, striding up and down the chamber and demanding hysterically that I apologize for calling him a liar.

I had not called him a liar; I told him so, and ordered him to report to police headquarters — which he did.

Immediately afterward I observed the various aldermen go out into the hall by ones and twos, hold mysterious conferences with one another, and come back again. Finally they introduced two bills. One was a reprimand for the police inspector. It was passed.

The second was a vote of censure, couched in grandiloquent language, upon the Mayor, for calling the policeman a liar — which he had not done. All voted for it except one man — one of the good government four.

They had absolutely no right to censure me, of course. But they did so with their usual earnest and enthusiastic seriousness. I arose, equally serious, and said: "Gentlemen, the Mayor is very sorry, but he is compelled to veto this order. The Mayor did not call Inspector Lehan a liar; consequently he can not approve the order."

I sat down, as seriously as I arose. There was silence over the assembly. It occurred to no one that there was any humor in the spectacle of the aldermen censuring the Mayor, without any legal right to do so, and of the Mayor, equally without any power, seriously vetoing the bill that censured him. Then, the meeting having come to a dead center, I arose and continued seriously:

"The annual appearance of the circus in Salem is to-morrow. The Mayor has received his customary tickets.

"There may be," I continued gravely, "an idea that the Mayor may entertain some feeling against members of the board of alderman which will deprive them of their usual circus tickets. This is a misconception. In order to dispel such an idea, the Mayor wishes to state that he will dispense to each aldermen, as he comes forward, his customary four tickets. To Alderman Adams, who so kindly voted against censuring him, the Mayor will give eight."

They took them gladly — Mr. Adams took his eight — and then the meeting adjourned.

As it did so, a thought occurred to me; I rose and said:

"The Mayor wishes to announce that he will issue a proclamation to-night to the citizens of Salem."

There was much curiosity as to my next step, and some suspense. The aldermen lingered about the hall to see what was going to happen. I stepped into another room and wrote my proclamation.

Half an hour later, at a meeting of the school board, I read my proclamation, as follows:

Whereas, It has pleased the citizens of Salem to elect me their chief executive, and during the five months that I have had the honor to serve in that capacity I have issued many orders that have been obeyed; and

Whereas, The time has now arrived when I must enforce my power as chief executive and insist that my orders shall be obeyed; and

Whereas, It has pleased Barnum & Bailey's circus to visit our city (a certain number of free tickets having been extracted from them for the servants of the people — including myself);

I therefore command that every man, woman, and child shall assemble on the street at the hour named for the purpose of viewing the circus parade. No excuses for non-attendance of children will be accepted, as that august body called the school board has ordered that all schools shall be closed.

Given by advice and consent of the Council (they having received their free tickets) this fourth day of June in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ten, in the one hundred and thirty-fourth year of our independence and the seventy-fourth year of Salem as a city.

ARTHUR HOWARD,
Mayor

I read the first part of this document in intense silence; and the opening of the second changed the surprised and anxious expression of my audience very little. It was only toward the end that the session began to turn in its seats and smile.

The incubus of sadness in governing the city of Salem was moved only with great effort, and then only slightly.

Eight Hundred Women Go My Bail

As a matter of fact, it was growing on me, even. It was hard to persevere against such general gloom. I was getting pretty tired, to tell the truth. I was going day and night; the few hours I had to myself, I could scarcely sleep. And I knew, of course, that always, steadily, the whole old machine at City Hall, which I had broken in on, was against me — watching and working all the time; and that continually my old enemies, headed by the *News*, were on my track, meaning sooner or later to pull me down. And very soon my libel suit was coming on — the suit by Damon of the *News*, which had been pushed forward. Then, unexpectedly, my bondsman surrendered me.

It was the liquor question again. The liquor men were much dissatisfied at my strictness in the enforcement of the liquor law. My bondsman, who was a liquor-dealer, came into my office one afternoon, and told me he had decided to give me up to the court. I had four days to get other bail. And then I was bailed by the eight hundred women of Salem.

The movement started, very logically, from the fact that I was Salem's "Dancing Mayor." Every night I danced — and very often at the dancing academy of "Professor" Adams — one of my staunch friends and supporters in my campaign.

The second general assembly he gave after I was elected, Mr. Adams invented and named a dance after me — the "Howard." It was a very popular dance, a sort of galop. You crossed your legs once, twice, then glided three times across the room. He introduced it by teaching some hundred couples, in my presence; and I danced it frequently.

At the time of my bondsman's last call, Professor Adams was in my office with me. He communicated the facts to Mrs. Adams, and she very soon started the chain of the eight hundred women.

I was, I suppose, a rather melancholy-looking figure at the time. I was white and hollow-eyed; my weight was only one hundred and five pounds — and I am a man five feet ten inches in height. Since my father's death I always had worn the black band of mourning on my hat. And the sympathetic women of Salem soon raised my bail.

It was eight hundred dollars. Meetings were held, and it was decided that the whole city should be canvassed, and that the bail be raised entirely by women, each woman contributing one dollar.

They borrowed half a dozen automobiles, and, five or six young women riding in each one, canvassed whole streets of the resident section systematically, and in two days the eight hundred dollar bills were all subscribed.

It was an extraordinary uprising — a popular demonstration like nothing that had ever happened in Salem, or in any other city, so far as I know. I could scarcely fail to appreciate it deeply.

It caused me curious embarrassment, of course. I did not know the names of the contributors; it was clearly better that I should not. Yet never after that could I pass a woman on the street without wondering if she were one of the eight hundred.

And, worse than all, the newspapers took up the event and rang the changes on it from Maine to California. I myself had clippings from four hundred.

But, in reality, it was a very serious and important thing for me. It was a guaranty that I had many friends and sympathizers in Salem. And I certainly felt then that I needed them, if I ever had.

I was exhausted — almost broken down by the endless strain of being Mayor. And my trial for libel was at hand. The *News*, confident that I would be convicted, blossomed out, day by day, into bigger type — anticipating the event.

TO BE CONTINUED

ONE DAY IN VAUDEVILLE

BY

HELEN GREEN

AUTHOR OF "IN THE FUNERALS," ETC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. M. CROSBY

IT was a four-story house in the center of the block, between Sixth Avenue and Broadway. Great white letters on a black ground at the edge of the roof read: "Von Linden & Nolan Music Publishing Co." Below the third-floor windows was painted: "The House of Sure-Fire Hits." From the sills of the second-floor windows depended a gilt sign, decorated with bars of music in black, and the legend: "We have the song YOU want." Over the entrance were several small signs: "Professionals welcome. Seven pianists to try our catalog with you. Songs for quartettes, duos, single turns, productions. Beautiful slides for illustrated numbers. Walk in."

Each of the seven pianists was spiritedly giving Von Linden melodies to the world, creating dubious harmonies. Blended voices clashed with voices pitched in conflicting keys. There were sudden stoppages, muffled cries of, "Try that over again." Departing feet racketed down, arriving feet plodded upward over uncarpeted halls and steps. Telephones rang, the strident sound but a modest tinkle in the general din. A door opened violently. "Benny's wanted!" shouted an unseen youth technically described as a "song-plugger." An invisible lady of stout lung power stood in the blackness of the second-floor hall, calling expectantly: "What room's the Four Ragtimers in? Tell Johnny to come out." She inquired from floor to floor, receiving no response. The seeker of Benny again came forth and announced to the depths and the heights that Benny was urgently desired.

"Rehearsin' in number six, kiddo," he said to the bereft one below him, who found number six before her, and hastened where the Four Ragtimers were "harmonizing" with infinite relish a number whose chorus began, "Oh—Oh—Oh! That won-der-ful ra-a-a-ag!" A moment, and she had shut herself in with them, but immediately reappeared, remarking: "Johnny says to ask Benny about it, an' I can't find him. Has he went out?"

Both she and the inquiring song-plugger above were startled by Mr. Benjamin Von Linden speaking from the fourth floor:

"Nobody can see me until after lunch. Don't matter who it is. Don't ring my 'phone—don't holler. Just leave me alone!" He withdrew.

"He needn't insult a person," whispered the lady.

"He ain't been himself for a week. Some family trouble," said the song-plugger confidentially. "He's got us all goin'."

"It certainly ain't no help to a performer, gettin' treated like this," she lamented.

Benny Von Linden sat in his private office, sulkily reading a letter from Miss Rosina Berger, his fiancée.

Miss Murphy, the stenographer, wearily awaited dictation of letters. Charlie Nolan, who composed the lyrics for the leading numbers of the House of Sure-Fire Hits, had impatiently asked if his partner was never going to write the words for the new summer waltz.

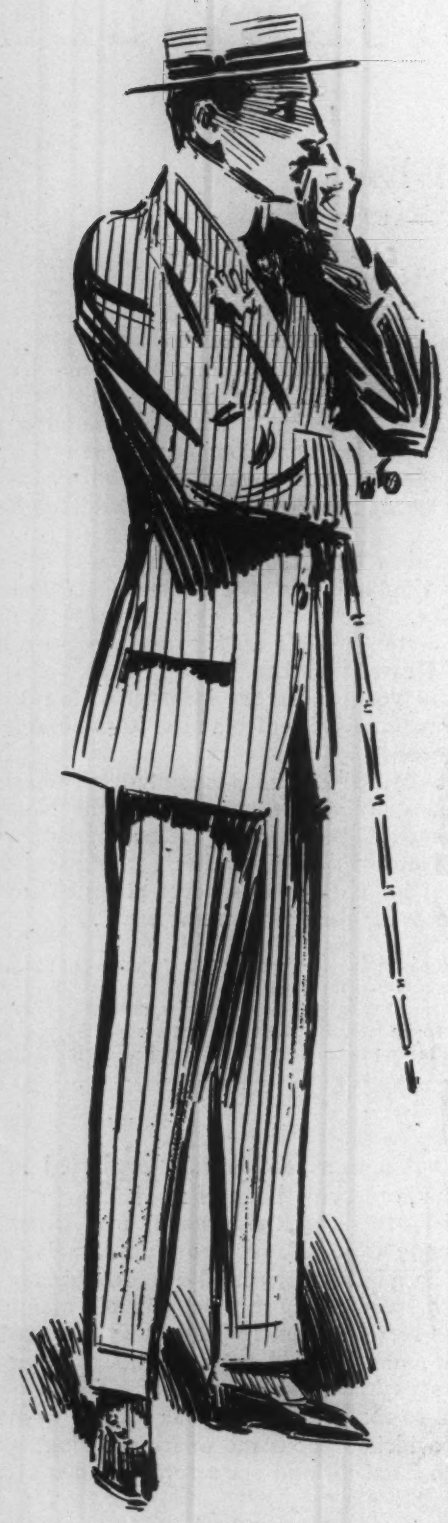
Father is violently opposed to a business that makes constant association with vaudeville people and the stage necessary, and I, as your wife, should positively refuse to be friendly with the actresses that you are always taking to lunch. Nor could I allow it. I have some self-respect, and I know what is due me, if you don't. My father wishes to see you.

ROSINA BERGER.

"What a sour face he has," reflected Miss Murphy, observing Benny's snarl.

"Her other crack was about me switching my name from Glauber to Von Linden, an' being born in Pike Street. I wouldn't been born there if I could help it. Her own old man had a push-cart in Essex Market; and if I wasn't a gentleman I'd told her so," thought Benny. "She's a tyrant, like her mother. The father's scared to move unless he asks the old woman. Rosina kicked about me wearing a violet vest with a Tuxedo, and she's sore on all my day suits. She's a grouch."

In a mirror opposite he looked at himself—a tall, lean young man of twenty-eight, in a fash-



"HE TURNED AND STARED—

ionable suit of light-colored homespun. His scarf was an infrequently seen shade of red. The sparkling pin embedded in it was rather noticeable, but surely indicative of tasteful affluence. His buttoned patent leathers had light suède tops to match the clothes. He was always pale. Rosina had at times mourned over his Napoleonic nose. Hers was an uncompromising snub. His dark hair was smartly parted, he shaved daily, had his monogram on handkerchiefs and shirt-sleeves, his overcoats were the final cry in style, he owned a dozen hats, and kept a valet. His wife would have a maid, and diamonds, and clothes to match her husband's elegance. He sent Rosina magnificent flowers, ordered baskets of fruit for her mother, sweets for her ravenous brothers and sisters, frequent expensive presents for an asthmatic grandmother, and presented liberal tips to the Berger servants. He had done *his* part. What did they think he was? A fine thing it would be for Von Linden, the publisher, to tell his friends in the profession: "My wife won't let me talk to you." Luncheons to actresses were necessary — over a delicate meal he persuaded them to sing his songs. A music publisher had to be with vaudeville people continually; must be friendly with theater doormen, so he could drop in to hear a song and leave in a hurry; had to know bandmen and orchestra leaders, managers — everybody.

The yearning of Father Berger for a conference meant that he wanted to settle final details and exact promises. If he went, he would leave the Berger home irrevocably shackled to Rosina. He shuddered.

"Your 'phone's rung twice," observed Miss Murphy interestedly.

"It can ring an' be — switched," said Benny.

Miss Murphy tossed her head. Just as he pleased!

Why had he tangled himself with Rosina? For a year that seemed three he had endured her querulousness. She acted as if they were married already. It was too matter-of-fact. He kissed her when he arrived, and again on leaving — a calm, cold smack. He had often been in vague revolt against her, but reflection calmed him. Would he prefer her to rush up and clasp him madly? To snuggle and coo over him? He had sighed, "No." Evidently, when engaged and expecting marriage, one became matter-of-fact. They discussed money, city elections, the feather-importing trade (in which Berger & Co. were engaged), the prices of property in localities that Rosina had decided would be suitable for their home. Sometimes, viewing the hot romances beginning and thriving during rehearsals and business visits in the House of

Sure-Fire Hits, he mutinied, hating Rosina and wedding plans, longing to be foolish and fond like other folk. But, when a pretty girl appeared, some man with more decision won her before he got further than wondering if she would greet her lover with a hug, or yawn at him. He stared so earnestly at Miss Murphy that she blushed in respectable confusion. Benny was thinking of a benefit at the Waldorf, of which Rosina and Mrs. Berger had been "patronesses"—of that fatal time when he had contributed two of the seven pianists with commands to play persistently through their employer's catalog. Purchasing lavishly at Rosina's flower booth, he met her father. Introduction, invitation to call, dinner *en famille*. Three months later he was engaged to Rosina. Nothing excited that girl. She yawned over a pigeon-blood ruby bracelet, forgot to wear a lavallière of diamonds and aquamarines, declined a set of Russian Crown sables because she had more furs than she could remember.

"Don't keep bothering me, Ben," she requested.

If Rosina were less used to luxury, she might have been thrilled by such offerings. His prosperity was but three years old, new enough for him to remember days when he could only wish for the things he might now purchase. The telephone rang.

"Mr. Von Linden's out," answered Miss Murphy. "He—oh, hold the wire, please."

She put her hand over the mouthpiece and looked at him. "It's Miss Berger calling."

"Tell 'em to hook her up," said Benny, sighing.

Miss Murphy pushed the extension toward him, and, with a delicate discretion, left the room. Pacing the hall, she heard him begin in a tone that swiftly rose. There were short sentences, emphatically spoken. A reiterated "I've gone over that with you before, Rosina. I tell you, my business demands my knowing 'em!"

—AND FOUND HER STARING"

Finally: "I didn't say I put my business before you, but I do say I'm sick and tired of this eternal nagging. Yes, nagging!"

"She must be a fiend, that woman," said Miss Murphy. "A regular nagger. Poor fellow!"

"I can't come to-night because I have to be at six or eight theaters. It's Monday, and new acts are opening. You'll what? Give me until to-morrow night to choose between you and my actress friends? We'd better stop talking, Rosina, before I say something ugly. Good-by!"

He was in light overcoat and hat, and deeply flushed, when Miss Murphy bustled in and began sorting her papers.

"She's the *limit*," said Benny, although he had never mentioned Rosina to Miss Murphy. "Meanness is her middle name! She let her maid wear a $950 ruby bracelet I gave her."

"Gracious mercy!" cried Miss Murphy, with such genuine emotion that he was greatly soothed. She observed him pityingly, and said:

"There are sweet, nice girls who'd give you a better deal than that, Mr. Von Linden."

"Wish I'd see one," said Benny.

"You would if you looked. Romance is likely to be just around the corner," said Miss Murphy sagely. She eyed a ring on her hand; and Benny, for the first time since their association, thought of her as a girl and not a necessary complement of her typewriting machine.

"Engaged?"

She smiled a happy assent. To have some one look like that at sight of a trumpery love token! Rosina *couldn't.*

"If a man who was lonesome — and would be good to them — her, I mean — you think, if he looks ——"

"He'll find one," said Miss Murphy. "Now you begin to look. Maybe it'll be this very day. I wouldn't stick to any one who wasn't kind. She isn't worth it."

"Come on out and have lunch?" Benny invited.

"I would, but *he* doesn't like me having lunches. Thank you just the same."

Benny smiled at her. She smiled at him. Descending the long flights to the street, he thought: "Rosina goes out with other people. Lot she cares what I think!"

In the street entrance he stopped. It was the luncheon hour of "Melody Lane." Directly across was the Howe & Hamlin Co., Von Linden & Nolan's most important rival. Ned Howe had written some "gingery" songs for the summer season, some of them livelier than the waltz "rags" and comedy numbers from the House of Sure-Fire Hits.

"Excuse me, but will you please tell me where Howe & Hamlin's is?"

She wore a black-and-white checked suit; a floppy white hat with cheap feathers fell to her shoulders; a large white suède bag depended by wide straps from her right shoulder; white buckskin shoes and white gloves completed a costume that made Benny decide: "Either a soubrette or she's ready to play on a rush call." She had a round young face, enough pinkness to tint it warmly, brown eyes with a promise of humor in them. The glimpse the hat permitted showed rich brown hair.

"Right over there," said Benny. Finding her destination so near, she said cheerfully: "I was silly not to see it. Thank you!"

Swinging her white bag, she briskly crossed the street. At Howe & Hamlin's door she turned and stared, and found Benny staring, whereat she fled inside, the hat flopping.

"Put black shoes on her and burn that hat and bag — dress her up, in fact — and she'd be a peach," he muttered. "Wonder if she'd let her maid wear her bracelets?"

Returning from luncheon, he found the Four Ragtimers still doggedly rehearsing a comedy number, with a worn pianist repeating the chorus. From the window of the room he could view a similar rehearsal room in Howe & Hamlin's. The girl in the white hat stood beside a piano, singing. Then she saw him, and appeared to halt the song, as the pianist looked up at her inquiringly. Immediately she gave Benny only her back to observe. The same afternoon he found himself holding the next strap to her in a Broadway car; but she concealed herself in the hat, and retired further into the obscurity it offered when a man gave her his seat. As she was obviously coming from Howe & Hamlin's, meeting her was not remarkable; but he left the car at Fortieth Street, and so did she. The conductor signaled before she was off, and Benny saved her from falling. Under his gaze she blushed, and spoke her thanks haughtily. He stood for a few moments at the corner of Broadway, wondering who she was, then went slowly up the stairs of the Actors' Society rooms, and on the second landing suddenly confronted her.

"This is contemptible!" she said fiercely, darting by him.

"Why, really, I—" he commenced, but she was down the stairs and gone.

"I've got as much right in here as she has," he told himself; "but let her go to the dickens."

He thought of her while he was at his piano, working on the "set of words" demanded by his partner, and found it helpful, for he evolved some satisfactory verses, using "those dusky eyes" in connection with "you've got me hypnotized," and humming gaily as he labored.

At seven o'clock he left a subway express train at 125th Street. There was considerable rough crowding, and, seeing a woman directly before him, he protected her with his arm from a rowdyish youth, delivering a useful shove to the latter meanwhile. On the platform he headed for the left stairway. So did the woman, who was garbed in dark clothes and a small black hat, with a white bag hanging from her shoulder. She turned, caroming into him, recognized him, and fled to the right exit.

"In a town the size of this, it's mighty queer to meet her so often," he thought. "Now, why can't I know that girl?"

He was gratified to learn that she did not always wear a white hat and shoes. She was certainly a professional, probably going now to one of the Harlem theaters.

"She'd make a fine little pal to take to dinner. Only a kid, too. She looks it. Can't have been in vaudeville long, if she is in it, and she wouldn't have been rehearsing otherwise. Why don't I know somebody that thinks something of me, instead of a stick like Rosina? Rosina! That's got to end. She don't give a hang for me, or I for her, but I didn't realize it until to-day."

Walking through 125th Street, he decided sadly: "I'm the most lonesome fellow in New York."

Her photograph might be in the lobby of the house where she was playing. He would look for it.

Monday was a busy night, for his "song-pluggers" must help those using Von Linden & Nolan's songs start the week with what the performer might describe in his advertisement in next Sunday's *Telegraph* as a "riot" of applause. The "plugger" is invariably a young man of astounding temerity. Sammy Martin was honor man of the Von Linden & Nolan corps. He had stowed away in Bernhardt's private car, and, coming forth, abruptly presented Benny Von Linden's latest waltz, dedicated to Mme. Bernhardt, and passionately begged the outraged artist to introduce it into her show whenever she could. He could charm an obstinate singer into discarding one of Howe & Hamlin's songs for which he or she was being paid fifty dollars a week by the publishers, and into singing two that he recommended, for a stipend of only twenty-five.

Sammy was in the lobby of a burlesque house when Benny arrived there. They sat in the rear of the orchestra, to note the effect when Maizie de Leon and ten ladies in Hussar jackets and gold tights should sing Mr. Nolan's "Who buys her dinner now?" The sprightly Maizie was mildly received until Sammy struck his iron palms together. Clap — clap — clap! Clap! Clap! Benny also clapped. The stage remained empty until certain weak persons were persuaded by example to clap. Then Maizie and her troupe marched forth, and, forming in a "hollow square," sent another verse hurtling to the roof.

"They're colder here than Hammerstein's on a Monday afternoon," said Sammy, exhaustedly clapping for a second encore. Benny nodded. He lacked interest in song-plugging. He was thinking of Rosina's ultimatum, and of the girl with the white bag. He made a tour of the vaudeville houses, scanning the bills of each. At his last stop he discovered a lobby photograph of "Dollie Murray — Songs and Dances." It was the fateful unknown, and from her billing he knew that she "opened the show," a guaranty of mediocrity.

"I'd rather have her doing a cheap act than find her a stuck-up skirt who's headlined a couple of bills and lost her head," he ruminated.

He got "back stage" easily. Weekly tipping of stage doorkeepers made that possible. He saw her, a moment after he was inside. She was talking to the stage manager, both seated on gilt chairs, with "props" piled high about them. A sketch was in progress on the stage, and Benny stepped gently, pausing in the gloom because he lacked room to pass. She was nervously swinging the white bag.

"But no act like mine can get a decent hand with the house empty and people tramping down the aisles! Put me on third and I'm sure I'll make good. It's my first chance in New York. Won't you?"

Her voice suited him. It was young, like her face.

"That's an awful bunch of songs you've got. Been sung to death here. I told you that."

"I've cut the opening and put on a new one to-night — 'Roses and You.'"

"That's what she got at Howe's," thought Benny, knifed by professional jealousy.

"It's a dead one in this house. They won't stand for that semi-classical stuff. I can't switch you, Miss Murray."

"But the booking agents'll never see me. None of them come in till after eight."

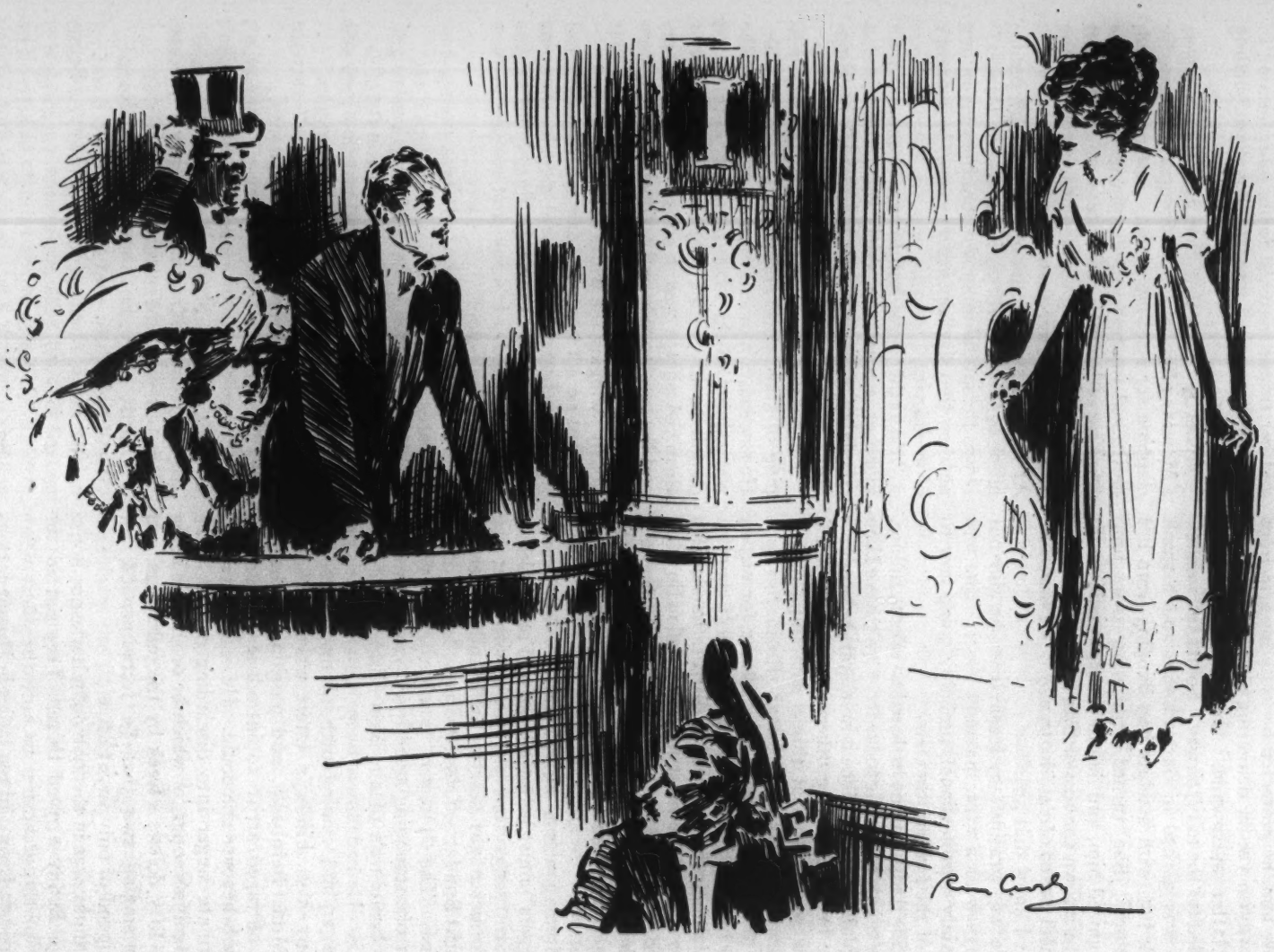
"Sorry, kiddo, but there's nothing doing."

"All right," she said coldly.

The stage manager hurried away. Benny moved forward. She was crying.

"White's the man you want to talk to. This fellow's a grouch, and always was, but White's his boss," he said eagerly.

"One's as mean as the other. I've seen White. Why, George Cohan couldn't win an empty house, could he?" she exclaimed.



"'I WANT YOU TO BE MY BABY BOY!' SHE SANG AT HIM."

"You bet he couldn't. But I can fix things better for you," said Benny recklessly. "There's a way to — I beg your pardon?"

"I said, please come into the light so I can see your face!"

She hurried him into the corridor on which the dressing-rooms opened.

"I thought so! Now, you listen to me. Just because I'm in vaudeville, don't you dare to think a fresh music publisher can make eyes at me, and then come up in the dark pretending he's somebody else, offering to make me solid with a manager! I'm not *that* kind of a fool, Mr. Benjamin Von Linden. Oh, I know you and your whole tribe, and I despise you all. Every single one!"

She was an angry little person, who stuck out her chin defiantly as she glared up at him.

"*Me* fresh?" said Benny, horrified.

Everybody in the publishing line accused him of being too retiring. Mr. Nolan had wept because Benny declined to call a soubrette "dearie" when urging her to add Von Linden & Nolan songs to her repertoire.

She gave a scornful, staccato laugh.

"You people think every girl wants her hand held and to be told she's got dreamy eyes; but I don't, young man, and I don't want people I don't know beginning conversations, if I do get a living back stage!"

"If you'd gone into my place for a song today instead of Howe & Hamlin's, Ned Howe wouldn't have seen your eyes. We don't bother with eyes if they can sing. They all look alike," said Benny.

"Oh, they do? And I suppose *you* didn't deliberately follow me the whole day?"

Benny swiftly reviewed various replies. He erased a grin as he said:

"No. But I will admit seeing you when you rubbered back this morning."

"I merely looked because I was positive you would be staring," she retorted; "and I was right!"

"You little fibber," he said paternally.

Miss Dollie Murray gritted her teeth at him. Benny smiled. Despite her irritation, she noticed his scarf, and liked it. He mentally clasped the sables scorned by Rosina under her pretty chin.

"Yours could be dreamy if you stopped snapping," he observed.

"If you will kindly get away from my dressing-room door, I will go in there. I have no desire to bandy words further, but let me inform you that for once you made a mistake. *All* actresses are not desirous of a masher's attentions!"

He had moved, and she was inside.

"'Masher'? The little idiot — unless she's kidding. But she was on the level. Miss Dollie Murray and her white bag — I don't know yet what awful thing I did — speaking to her, I suppose. Lucky she hasn't met Sammy, for she'd take a gun when he began."

He stood in the corridor, sniffing the heavy smell of grease-paint and perspiration,— the Juggling McSwatts were preparing for the street with their door open,— excited by a thrilling thought. He had "looked," as Miss Murphy suggested. Suppose he looked no further than the girl on the other side of this door? He began to worry about her, a little woman using the best time of her life playing two or three or four shows a day, with no time for air and exercise, or for healthy amusements. She probably sat up half the night in a Broadway restaurant, or ate indigestible food in her room when on the road. Put that girl in well-cut clothes — and the sables — restrain her to hats of reasonable size — he abruptly imagined her in pink, his favorite shade — a pink gown — and bracelets would become her arms, he was certain. And he could find bracelets that would pale the rubies of Rosina's fetter. Naturally, when panoplied in her pink splendor, she would be seated at ease in a handsome house, or apartment, chatting with him, thinking of him, and delighted to be there with him. She ——

"If you don't go away this minute, I'll 'phone out front about it!"

She had to whisper because of the Juggling McSwatts, who were discoursing serenely about the bows they had taken. Benny replied cautiously, turning toward her door:

"If the house manager introduces me, couldn't I square myself?"

"I don't wish to know any music publishers."

"You can know one. I don't want you to meet any of the rest. And — now wait a second, won't you? Let me get you a better place on the bill. You can cut me then."

"And let these people think I begged you to? No, indeed. Take your fingers from that door, sir, or I'll smash 'em!"

"You'd hurt me like that?"

"Yes, I would," she said, and, flushing, she shoved the door against his detaining hand.

"Well, come on, paw; don't be all night," urged Mrs. Juggling McSwatt.

"Oh, heavens, go away! They're coming out!"

All he could see through the space his fingers made was an anxious brown eye.

"I'm going — but I'm coming back," said Benny, disappearing.

Dollie Murray, seated on the end of her theater trunk, said softly: "Well, he's fresh, but not — exactly — the way I thought he was."

She was ready to go home, but she loitered, feeling pleasantly adventurous on this first night of her New York appearance. It was four years since she led the "march" at a dime museum, in her native Cincinnati, where there was a performance once an hour, and she furnished her own tights and slippers, for a wage of five dollars a week. Rising slowly to a state of abundance permitting residence in hotels at fifty cents a day "single," she sang with an "illustrated song sheet," spent half a season in black-face with a female minstrel show, finished that season as half of a "sister act," working nearer the East, toward vaudeville's lode-star, "twelve weeks solid, around New York." She adorned bills on the Poli Circuit, hearing wild stories of theaters in New York and Philadelphia that had good ventilation, baths for performers, hot water in the dressing-rooms, all the electric light one craved to make up under, instead of an aged eight-candle power, a tap that ran rusty water, and windows that some one had wished shut back in 1893.

She got to Newark, to New Haven, and was unexpectedly, booked for New York to fill the time of an act that had canceled. When Benny glimpsed her in Twenty-eighth Street, she had just bought the white shoes, and she only changed them at night because they pinched. The white bag and white hat had been hers fifteen minutes when his artistic eye condemned them. Dollie intended to look like a girl who was accustomed to playing New York. These gauds made her feel quite a woman of the world. An obliging pianist in Howe & Hamlin's had informed her that the tall young man loafing in the doorway opposite was Von Linden, publisher, composer, writer, and what not, whose income was something to marvel at.

Thank heaven, she had possessed the stamina, the sterling virtue, to confront him as if he had been the humble musician who had described him. In the four long years no one had sent Dollie American Beauties with hundred-dollar bills enwrapping the stems, and an invitation to supper, or a diamond sunburst of which the sender humbly said that if it were worn he would expect the privilege of settling her dinner check. Stage-door Johnnies had never striven to buy her a meal. Once an acrobat had carried her bag to the train because his wife asked him to, and a property-man left a widower with six children had inquired with tender meaning if she ever contemplated settling down.

One day in New York! She was on the same bill with Eva Tanguay — the gifted Eva had given her a chocolate drop. She heard the "added attraction" borrow a dollar for a taxi, until night, from the "special feature." She had seen Twenty-eighth Street, where the performers of the world went to find a song, and got a song herself from a Howe of uncomfortably familiar manner who favored "holding hands." As to her place, some one had to open the bill, and it was a good deal to be on it at all. Still — it was a hard spot for a single turn.

Although signs read, "Performers not allowed in the entrances," several watched the Six Musical Ziliphones, with Henry Ziliphone standing on his head as he played the double bass saxophone. This is a difficult feat, and Dollie, peering out at the appreciative critics in "front," admired Henry with them. Above the horseshoe of white faces were crowded boxes, and in one stage-box sat two ladies dressed with a magnificence more suitable to the Metropolitan than an uptown vaudeville theater. Diamonds, enormous plumes — one wore a white hat as big as Dollie's. She was a florid young woman who replied unamiably to the remarks of her companion. Behind her sat a stout, bald-headed man, who yawned frequently. And next to him was Mr. Benjamin Von Linden. Instinct caused Dollie to draw back, for Benny had seen her. And he was looking at her, making an almost imperceptible motion which she could not interpret. So those were his friends, those women laden with the spoils of opulence? She now regarded the agile Henry Ziliphone and the five inferior Ziliphones with indifference, and secretly bent her eyes on Rosina Berger, appraising plumes, diamonds, the beefishness of Rosina's figure, that pudgy hand on the box-rail. Rosina had seen Benny smile at the girl in the first entrance, and she rebuked him with a wifely air. Dollie felt this from their attitude, and that he was not receiving admonition meekly. He had answered sharply, and Papa and Mama Berger rallied to the side of their child. Dollie had a new-born desire to be some one else — an actress with a wondrous Continental act in which she would glitter and sing and dance, compelling reluctant respect from the haughty woman with the plumes.

Behind her rose angry voices. The stage manager profanely demanded that Noodle's Seals go on, whether Noodle had broken a leg by falling into a coal-hole or not. The assistant, then? Let him put them through the tricks! The assistant had a night off and was miles away in the fastnesses of the Bronx. Noodle's Trained Seals closed the show, and, erudite as were the aquatic performers, they required a mind to direct them. The stage manager violently impugned Noodle's motives in breaking a leg.

"It's nothing to a cussed performer if a whole show's crabbed like this," he complained.

"'I'M GOING TO KEEP ON BEING WHERE YOU ARE,' HE SAID"

The seals followed the Ziliphones. It was 10.36, and only the players in a sketch recently concluded remained in the dressing-rooms. Stage manager, electrician, and property-man formed an agitated group which was augmented by Dollie Murray, who said boldly:

"If there's nobody to substitute, and you can't 'phone in time, let *me* go on! Only a few of 'em saw me, and I'll just sing and dance my very best!"

At 10.42 the number "One," flashed on the electric name-boards. Benny saw a dainty figure in a pink chiffon dancing-dress trip forth.

"She isn't Noodle's Marvelous Educated Seals," said Rosina, "and I hate singing acts."

Benny was alarmed to see several persons leaving. By some happy fortune, she whom his mind already called "my little girl" was to have another chance to-night. But a "big feature" was the act to close a show with. A sated audience, having listened to several "single turns," were very likely to make their way out after their first glimpse of her. The orchestra played the introduction to "Roses and You," a song for a notable voice, not "popular" enough for the patrons of this most "popular" house.

With stereotyped gestures, in a neat little vaudeville voice, Dollie began.

"She'd better dance!" he thought, dismayed.

His eyes searched the house for Sammy Martin and the two stout-palmed "pluggers" under Sammy's charge. Sammy had been with his chief when an usher informed Benny that the Bergers desired his presence in their box.

"Oh, Lord — are they here? Well, I'll be right there. Say, Sammy, go easy when the Howard Sisters and McJoke and DeWitt come on. No rough stuff, you know," was what he said to Sammy, who, offended, answered:

"Monday night an' not warm this bunch up? They wouldn't clap Mary Garden without a starter."

"The party in the box — the lady, that is — she's against that part of my business. She says it's vulgar."

"I guess her nor no one else'll rouse this mob without real work," replied Sammy huffily, "an' it goes if she hears it."

While the Howard Sisters "worked," Sammy was moderate; but with McJoke and DeWitt singing four Von Linden & Nolan songs, and getting forty dollars a week from the firm for doing it, Sammy forgot the delicately attuned woman seated beside Benny, and created tumult with his practised palms.

"If you want a reason for my not going to theaters with you, that disgraceful noise he's making is enough!" said Rosina angrily.

"I have to get my songs popularized," retorted Benny.

"See those people who know you're Von Linden, the publisher, looking up here and grinning. Isn't it perfectly disgraceful, Papa?" cried Rosina.

"I am rather well known," said Benny, complacent outwardly, privately contrasting her hefty neck with the white, delicious softness that a collarless blouse had revealed as one of Dollie's allurements.

"You talk mit' me to-morrow, and we shall find you a nicer business that Rosy shall like better," said Papa Berger.

Benny sought and admonished Sammy.

"Chase down to the Colonial and drop in here to-morrow night," he ordered.

If he had told him instead to stay and smite as he had seldom smote for the singer of "Roses and You"! The first rows were deserting; discarded programs rustled to the floor, a raising and lowering of seats began as their occupants reached for hats. Dollie sang bravely, but she was nervous, realizing the futility of her effort to "hold" the house. Her glance fell on Benny in the stage-box.

"Are you crazy?" cried Rosina, as he leaned far past her and spoke to the girl on the stage.

"Sing 'Be My Baby Girl' next — and cut this. That may keep 'em," Benny said distinctly.

Dollie, warbling with a frightened air, nodded. The departing rows underneath the box heard him, and they suspended preparations, waiting curiously, wondering if the earnest young man in evening clothes was part of the act, and what he intended to do.

"'Baby Girl,' quick! — this is a lobster," said Dollie to the leader.

"Git the hook!" came from the gallery, with a prolonged hiss. Benny started. That hiss was Sammy's, one that he had rehearsed until it was perfection. It held utter weariness and scorn, and incited neighbors to unseemly demonstrations.

"I kin git any performer's goat if I hiss 'em," Sammy often bragged.

Benny could not locate him. Probably he was standing near the door, delaying, from excess of pride in his profession, to put down any applause of the songs furnished by Howe & Hamlin. The hiss again!

"Let go my arm; I don't care whether you like it or don't. Can't you see she's up against it?" cried Benny to Rosina's fury, and he clapped to drown the hiss. The sheep in the audience were puzzled. Some laughed and applauded, more hissed, and the man in the gallery repeated:

"*Git the hook!* She was on oncet."

"Keep your nerve, girlie," counseled the leader; and Dollie, above him, gave a tremulous appealing smile as she danced the steps of the "buck" that was part of the number's "business."

"Take her off!" — and a steady hissing.

She sang the verse so low that the hissers, and the voices of ushers endeavoring to effect order, were far plainer. She looked at Benny, and was heartened by his tense face. *One* was for her!

Her smile grew; she forced strength and sweetness into the song's chorus.

"Spot on the other box, you yap," said the stage manager, panting from a climb to reach the spot-light man, "on the guy leanin' out — now you got him."

The spot-light glared on Benny, and the ladies behind shrank in modest confusion.

"I want you to be my baby boy!"

sang Dollie at him, and, in a deep rich bass that had been until then his dearest secret, Benny replied:

"If you'll be — my — baby — girl!"

"He's singin' a Howe & Hamlin song!" gasped Sammy, and fell against the house fireman.

"That's Von Linden. He wrote 'Turkey Rag,' and ''Way Down in My Heart,' and here he's singing Ned Howe's rag," said an experienced first-nighter, profoundly impressed.

Less informed spectators sensed that it was unusual. This was not merely an actress singing at a "plant" in a box. The hissers stopped to observe the excited lady of the diamonds and plumes as she pulled at her lyrical escort's arm.

Benny and Dollie finished the next six lines together. Tears of which she was unaware were in Dollie's dark eyes. Benny saw them. He could have leaped from the box to comfort her, to bear her out of vaudeville forever; but he sang, because she would much prefer to win success where failure had seemed certain.

There was a dance between verses, and Dollie danced so nimbly and gracefully that he who had demanded the "hook" said sonorously:

"That's some steppin', boys!"

Dollie hurried through the second verse, eager to reach the chorus.

"I want you to be my baby boy!"

she trilled coquettishly, and the spot-lighted Benny replied with ardor:

"You must be — my — baby — girl!"

"We are going. You shall never, never see Rosina from this hour of humiliation. Good evening," said Mama Berger, from the rim of the spot-light.

"Rosina, I'm sorry. I can explain if you'll wait a minute," said Benny, from within the disk of light.

"The engagement's broken — broken!" said Papa Berger fiercely.

"Ab-so-lutely," said Rosina, like an empress; and, when Benny looked around, he was alone in the box.

It was all over! No more Rosina, no more shackles — not that sort, he amended. The house was applauding stormily as he sat with calm face under embarrassing illumination. Above the general clapping he heard a steady whack, whack, and knew that Sammy was tardily repairing the work of the terrible hiss. Pink little Dollie — pink was his favorite color — was taking many bows. She danced, and her two long brown braids fell down, creating laughter and renewed applause. The spot-light now followed her, and Benny quietly left the box. He was in the crowd as it surged out, whistling and humming a rival publisher's "rag" that he had helped to public notice. He could have sung that chorus a hundred times, yelled it to the stars winking above the lights of 125th Street. He had broken with Rosina, no matter how, or if she had not plenteous cause for indignation. Rosina did not understand vaudeville ways, or music publishers.

"What a lucky thing for me she didn't!" he muttered.

He waited by the stage-door, careless of departing stage-hands and orchestra men, who smiled when they heard him blithely whistling Ned Howe's "rag." They had all gone when Dollie Murray emerged, wearing the big white hat and the white shoes, dangling the white bag. Such preparation for an ordinary ride in the subway! Meanly he hid in the shadow, watching her glance quickly up, down, and across the street. She halted under the light to stare again.

"He isn't here!" she sighed.

"Yes, he is," said Benny.

His hand reached forth and touched hers. She jumped, and then her eyes leaped radiantly to his. He squeezed the hand tightly, and thrilled as the hand squeezed back.

"I'm going to keep on being where you are," he said. "Do you think you can stand having me around?"

They moved forward into the deeper shadows. Benny still possessed her hand.

"Could you — Dollie?"

"I'd try to get used to it," said Dollie.

THE SIXTY-FIRST SECOND

BY

OWEN JOHNSON

AUTHOR OF "STOVER AT YALE," ETC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A. B. WENZELL

CHAPTER I

IN the year 19—, toward the end of the month of October, the country was on the eve of a stupendous panic. A period of swollen prosperity had just ended in which Titans had striven in a frenzy for the millions that opportunity had spilled before them.

For months the stock market had steadily lowered, owing to the flight of the small investor, affrighted by the succession of investigations, the fear of readjustments, and the distrust of the great manipulators. The public, which understands nothing of the secret wars and hidden alliances of finance, had begun tremulously to be aware of the threatening approach of a stupendous catastrophe. So in the ominous, grumbling days of October, when the air was full of confusing rumors and violent alarms, the public, with its necessity for humanizing all sensations, perceived distinctly only two figures, each dramatically in peril, about whose safety or ruin the whole comprehensible drama of the financial cataclysm seemed to center.

These two figures, both presidents of great trust companies, giants in their own sphere, represented two opposite elements of that great mass of society which seeks its level in Wall Street. Bernard L. Majendie, president of the Atlantic Trust Company, member of every exclusive club, patron of the arts, representative of one of the oldest American families, accustomed to leadership and wealth from colonial times, was linked in a common danger with John G. Slade, president of the Associated Trust Company, promoter, manipulator, owner of a chain of Western newspapers, a man who had hauled himself out of the lowest depths of society. Many believed that both, in the relentless readjustment which the banks were forcing on the trust companies, were destined to be blotted out in the general catastrophe. Many others, perceiving the strange oppositeness of the two individuals, speculated on which would survive the other, if indeed either were to persist.

About three o'clock of a certain afternoon, when each extra brought a new alarm, John G. Slade came abruptly from the great library, down the sounding marble descent that was a replica of the famous rampe of the Château of Gerny, into the tapestry-hung vestibule of his palace on upper Fifth Avenue.

He stood a moment in blank meditation, while the third man held his overcoat open and ready, watching anxiously the frown on the face of the master, who stood before him, a massive six foot four. Already in the great marble home itself was that feeling of alarm from the outer world which had communicated itself to the servants. Suddenly Slade, returning to himself, detected the furtive scrutiny of the footman and the butler, who had so far departed from their correctly petrified attitudes as to exchange wondering glances. He frowned, pointed to his loose black felt hat and his favorite cane, and tore so rapidly through the heavily ironed doors and down the steps to the waiting automobile that the second footman stumbled twice in his haste to be before him. Two or three reporters, who had been lurking behind the great marble bastions, sprang forward as Slade, disappearing in the motor, was whirled away.

"Up river," he said briefly, and sank back in his seat.

He was in the middle forties, a man noticeable anywhere for the overmastering vitality of his carriage and the defiant poise of his head. Nature had admirably designed him for what he was intended to be — a being always at war with men and surrounding circumstances. His face was devoid of any fine indications of sensibility, of reflection or humorous perception of life. The upper and lower maxillary bones were in such gaunt relief they seemed rather

steel girders hung to support a granite will. The head was square, sunk rather than placed upon his shoulders, and the line of the head at the back was straight and full of crude power. He had, at the same time, a suggestion in the shoulders of the obstinacy of the buffalo, the most distinctive of American beasts, and in the eye-pits of the fatalism of the Indian, which as a type often seems not so much the physical tenacity of an unexplained race as it does the peculiar impress of a continent and an atmosphere surcharged with vitality.

The eyes were a clear blue, the eyes of a boy in mischief who is still sublimely defiant of the tripping obstacles of an ethical code. This quality of the boy, characteristic too of the American, was the secret of all his seeming inconstancy of unrelenting cruelty and sudden sentimental impulsiveness. Life was to him a huge dare, and all the perils of finance the hazards of a monstrous gamble, which alone were able to supply him with that overwhelming quality of sensation that such men covet in life.

A waif at six; a wharf rat at twelve, endowed with the strength of a man; leader of a gang at sixteen, hated, feared, always fighting; gaining his first start in politics, and then, by making a lucky strike in the silver mines of Colorado, educating himself with primitive necessary knowledge, always acquiring, never relaxing what his fingers touched, a terrible antagonist, risking his all a dozen times in the hunger for a greater stake — he had emerged at last from the churning vortex of a brutal struggle, possessor of a fortune that fifty times had hung on the events of a day. For five years he had been involved in countless lawsuits, accused of chicanery, extortion, conspiracy, and even murder. At the end of which period he came forth victorious, without losing a single suit, surrounded, it is true, by every calumny that could be invented, accused of manipulating legislatures, corrupting judges, and removing witnesses.

Through it all he had remained unshattered, boyishly delighted, his body unyielding to the strain of sleepless nights and months of unrelenting vigilance. He had lived hard, ready to gamble for a thousand or a hundred thousand, cynically announcing his motto:

"No friends. So long as every man is my enemy, I am safe."

And this theory of life he had carried out to the minutest detail. Men represented to him simply the male of the species, to be met head on, to strive with and overthrow. So completely did this obsess him that no one, not even his secretaries (whom he changed constantly), had the slightest inkling of his plans. Two of his subordinates, hoping to profit by their intimacy, had foolishly invested on his deliberately given tips — and had been ruined. Afterward he cited their cases as a warning to other applicants.

From the start, always counting on the year ahead, he had outrun his income. When he had ten thousand, he was spending fifteen; at fifty thousand, seventy-five. Every one who came in contact with him was paid twice over, and robbed him in the bargain — a fact on which he counted and to which he was quite indifferent.

Coming to Wall Street in that period of fevered speculation, he had been among the first to perceive the enormous instruments at hand in the development of a chain of trust companies which would supply a conveniently masked agency for the enormous capital that he needed to compete on equal terms with the leaders of the Street.

That now, for the first time, he was confronted with a situation of absolute and impending ruin, brought him not the slightest depression, but rather that exhilaration and sudden clearness of mind which is characteristic of the gambler face to face with the supreme hour which means absolute bankruptcy or a fortune.

At every block some one on the crowded sidewalk, or a group in a passing carriage, turned with a hasty exclamation at the sight of his bulky figure under the black sombrero, fleeing in the red automobile that was itself at this period a rarity. At one point where a blockade compelled him to halt, a newsboy, jumping on the sideboard, thrust a newspaper in his face. He flung him a dime and glanced at the headlines:

MARKET STILL GOING DOWN

RUMORED SUSPENSIONS

Then he tossed it aside and returned to his own calculations. All at once he roused himself and addressed the chauffeur:

"Harkness, Mrs. Braddon's. Take the park."

But as the automobile, turning from the river, descended by way of green woods, he began restlessly to repent of his choice. His hatred of men had made him strangely dependent on women. It was not that they were able to establish any empire over his senses, but that they supplied a curious outlet to his vanity. At times, especially as in the present, when he felt the necessity of assembling every resource to meet a crisis, it became absolutely necessary for him to find, in the tribute he exacted from them, that self-confidence which he needed to override other obstacles. Often he would take in his automobile three or four women of that class which is half professional, half of the world, and, running slowly through the pleasant country, recount stories of his early struggles, of

"IN THAT GAY PARTY ONE PERSON WAS A THIEF. BUT WHICH ONE? . . . A MATCH
THE TABLE WAS

SPUTTERED IN THE HANDS OF SLADE. THERE WAS A CRY OF AMAZEMENT AND HORROR. ABSOLUTELY BARE"

how he had railroaded an enemy to prison, or caught an adversary in a turn of the market and broken him. And when these tales of unrelenting enmity made his audience shudder, he keenly perceived it, and enjoyed almost a physical delight.

But this afternoon, as the car came to a stop before one of the great apartment-houses that front the park, he remained seated, unsatisfied and defrauded. It was not a woman of the superficial wit of Mrs. Braddon who could occupy and stimulate his mind in this crisis.

"Drive on," he said sharply. "Turn the corner and stop at the hotel."

There he descended, and entering went to the telephone.

"Mrs. Kildair?" he said eagerly, a moment later.

"Who is it, please?"

"This is Slade — John Slade. I'm coming over."

"I can't see you now," said a voice with a curious musical quality of self-possession. "I told you five o'clock."

"What difference does half an hour make?" he said impatiently.

"I have other company. You will have to be patient. At five."

The connection was shut off. He rose angrily, unaccustomed to any check to his immediate impulses. At the steps a boy came skipping down for the toll he had forgotten. He paid the exact amount, contrary to his custom, and drove his body back into the cushioned seat.

"Where to, sir?" said Harkness, turning.

"Anywhere," he answered gruffly, and, thwarted in his desire, he said to himself furiously: "That woman always opposes me! I must teach her a lesson. I won't go at all."

But at the end of a moment he pulled out his watch impatiently and calculated the time.

"Home," he said suddenly.

At the house, he ran rapidly through the opening doors and up the stairs to his bedroom, where he unlocked a little safe fixed in the wall behind a tapestry that hid it, and took out a tray of rings. Sorting them quickly, with a low, cynical chuckle, he selected a magnificent ruby, slipped it into his pocket, closed the safe, and passed out of the house with the same rapidity with which he had entered.

"Mrs. Kildair's, Harkness," he said. "Drive so as to get me there at five-fifteen."

"Now we shall see," he said to himself, with a smile, gazing at the ring in the palm of his hand with a man's contemptuous contemplation of the stone which could hold such fascination over a woman's soul. For him it was absolutely necessary, as a first step toward his conquest of all his enemies, to feel his power over this one present resistance.

The idea that had come into his head restored his good humor and aroused in him a certain joy of energy. He forgot momentarily his errand, absorbed in his own battle for existence.

"To-day is Thursday," he said, with renewed energy. "Next Wednesday will be the crisis. I must find out what Majendie is going to do. Snelling's the man to know — or Garraboy."

The car stopped. He sprang out and, without giving his name, entered the elevator. At the apartment a Japanese servant took his things and ushered him into the low-lit greens of the studio, which ran the height of the two floors that formed the duplex apartment.

Mrs. Rita Kildair was stretched on a low Récamier sofa, watching him with amused eyes as he entered with that atmosphere of strife and fury that seemed always to play about him. She waited until he had come to her side before she raised her hand to his, in a gesture that had no animation, saying:

"How do you do?"

Something in the tranquil, amused self-possession of her pose made him stupidly repeat the question. Then, forgetting his resolve to show no impatience, he said impetuously:

"Why did you keep me waiting?"

"Because I did not wish to see your highness then."

"Not dressed?"

"No, I was amusing myself with a very nice boy."

"Who?"

She smiled and, without heed to his question, motioned him to a chair with a little gesture, not of her arm, but of her fingers, on which she wore several rings of unusual luster. She had, as a woman, that same magnetic self-consciousness that distinguishes the great actress, aware that every eye is focused on her and that the slightest change of her hand or shift of her head has an instantaneous importance.

Slade obeyed her with a sudden sense of warm content.

"Smoke?" he said, taking out a cigar. "Permission?"

He helped himself to a match, sunk himself in the great chair, crossed his legs, and looked at her.

Rita Kildair gave that complex appearance of a woman much younger than she seemed, or of a woman much older. She was at that mental phase in her life when she exhaled to the fullest that perfume of mystery which is the most feminine and irresistible of all the powers that a woman exerts over the masculine imagination, if indeed it is not the sum of all seductions. The inexplicable in her own life and individuality

was heightened in every way by the subservience of outward things, whether by calculation or by an instinctive sense of interpretation.

The great studio, to the neglect of the electric chandelier, was lit by half a dozen candles, which flung about conflicting eddies of wavering lights and shadows. In farther corners were a divan, a piano, a portrait on an easel, lounges, waiting like so many shadows to be called forth. A standing lamp, not too near, bathed the couch on which she lay with a softened luster. Her tea-gown of liberty silk, with tones that changed and mingled with each other, was of the purple of the grape, an effect produced, too, by the superimposition of one filmy garment on the other. A slippered foot and ankle came forth from the fragrant disorder of the skirt, either by studied arrangement or by the impulse of a woman who is confident of all her poses. Her nose, quite the most individual feature, was aquiline, yet not such as is associated with a masculine character. Rather, it was vitally sensitive, and gave, in conjunction with the intent and instantaneous aspect of her grayish eyes, the instinctive, almost savage appetite for possession and sensation that is characteristic of the sex.

No one looked at her without asking himself a question. Those who believed her under thirty wondered at the experiences that must have crowded in upon her. Those who believed her nearer forty still marveled at her mastery over her youth. Those of an analytical mind left her always with a feeling of speculation framed in two questions — whence had she come and where would she end?

It was this latter speculation more than any other that absorbed Slade, irresistibly intrigued by the elusiveness of a fascination which he could not analyze. She endured his fixed glance without annoyance, absorbed, too, in the thoughts which his entrance had brought her. Finally, adapting her manner to his, she said with his own abruptness:

"Well, what do you want to say to me?"

"I'm wondering what you are after in this life, pretty lady?" he said directly.

"What do *you* want?"

"Power."

"Not to be bored."

They smiled by common consent.

"And now we know no more than we did before," she said. She stretched out her slender hand against the purple folds of her gown, and her eyes lingered on the jewels that she held caressingly before them — a look that did not escape the man.

"By thunder, you're the strangest thing I've run into," he said, shifting his legs.

"On each of the eight times we have been alone," she said, smiling, "you have made precisely that same discovery. Did you forget?"

"I'd like to know something about you," he said.

"How old I am — about my husband — what I am doing here — am I rich — what's my past — and so on. Consider all these questions asked and refused — for the ninth time. And now, what — why did *you* come here?"

He put aside his cigar impatiently, propelled himself to his feet, and came forward until his knee touched the couch. She looked up, pleasantly aware of so much brute strength held in leash above her.

"Sit down."

And, as he remained standing, she took a little electric button attached to a coil that was on the couch, and pressed it. In the hall outside a buzz was heard, and then the soft, sliding step of Kiki.

"Tea?" she said, turning to him with an amused look, the little button pressed against her thin, sharp row of teeth, that were clear and tiny as a child's.

"No, of course not," he said furiously.

"No tea, Kiki," she said, in that same round, musical tone from which she seldom varied. She held the button in her long fingers, caressing her cheek with it, and, looking at him with half-closed eyes, repeated:

"Sit down."

Though the forward movement of Slade had been unconscious and quite devoid of any personal object, he was angrily aware that she had availed herself of his action to introduce a tantalizing defiance which awakened all the savage in him, as he realized the helplessness of his crude strength before the raillery that shone from her eyes.

He drew his chair closer to her, sat down on its edge, one knee forward, his chin in his hand half concealing his face, looking at her with the shrewd cruelty of a prosecuting attorney.

"What's your game?" he said.

"The game itself," she answered, with a little animation in her eyes and a scarcely perceptible gradual turning of her whole body toward him.

"What's your game?" he repeated.

She looked at him a moment as she might have looked at a child, and then, imitating the gesture with which he had sunk his chin in his palm, said:

"What a convenient formula! And is that the way you always begin?"

"Perhaps."

"Do you know," she continued, "it is extraordinary how simple you big men — you

trust kings — are. You have the vision of an eagle on one side, and the groping glance of a baby when you deal with us. Sometimes I think that it's all instinct, that all you understand is to throw down what resists you — that you haven't great minds at all, and that that is all that interests you in business and in us. That is why a big man will always end up by meeting some little woman who will lead him around by the nose. Any little fool of a woman who knows enough never to cease resisting you can do it."

"Do you like me?" he said brutally.

"Yes."

"Much?"

"Quite a good deal."

"Are you planning to marry me?"

She smiled her languid, amused smile without shifting her glance from his.

"Why don't you come to the point?" she said.

"What do you mean?"

"I don't have to ask your game; I know it."

"What do you know?"

"Shall I tell you why you came here at a moment when you are at bay, attacked everywhere?"

"Why?"

"To find out what I know about Majendie."

"Do you know anything?"

"He is coming here to-night," she said.

"No, that is not it," he said scornfully, rising and again approaching her. "You know better. You exhilarate me — you wake me up; and I need to be stimulated. So you've got it back in your little brain to marry me," he said, looking down with amused contemplation at the reclining figure, that was not so much human as a perfumed bed of flowers; "that is, if I pull through and keep my head above water."

He hesitated a moment, and then said:

"Why did you keep me waiting? Just to annoy me?"

"I wonder," she said, looking up from under her eyelashes at his towering figure. "Perhaps it was to teach you some things are difficult."

"That's it, eh?"

"Perhaps — and I'm afraid I shall irritate you many more times."

He took a step nearer and said abruptly:

"Look out! I don't play fair."

"Neither do I," she said.

She took the button up again, frowning in a nonchalant way, and held it a moment while she waited for his decision. He shrugged his shoulders and stood back, taking several steps toward the center of the room.

"Listen, John G. Slade," she said, her tone changing from the felinely feminine to the matter-of-fact, "don't let's continue as children. You are no match for me at this game. I warn you. Come. Be direct. Will you have me as an ally?"

He turned and looked at her, considering.

"In what way?"

"Is it of importance to you to know the probable fate of Majendie and the Atlantic Trust?"

"Yes — in a way."

"I may have means of learning just that information to-night."

"What do you want in return?"

"Full confidence. I want two questions answered."

"What?"

She had raised herself to a sitting position out of the languor which was not the indolence of the Oriental, but rather the volcanic slumbering of the Slav, always ready to break forth into sudden tremendous exertion.

"Can the Associated Trust meet its Wednesday obligations without assistance?"

"And second?" he said, amazed at the detailed knowledge that her question implied.

"Second, if it can't, will the Clearing-House help it through?"

"What difference to you would it make to know?"

"It would."

"How long have you known Bernard Majendie?" he said slowly.

She accepted the question as a rebuff.

"There are my terms," she said, sinking back on the couch. "You don't wish an ally, then?"

"No."

"You don't trust me?"

"No."

"I knew you wouldn't," she said indolently; "and yet, I could help you more than you think."

"I trusted a man once," he said scornfully. "I have never made that mistake with a woman."

"As you wish."

"Are you trying a flyer?" he said, smiling. "That's the game, is it — a tip?"

"I have told you," she said coldly and in a tone that carried conviction, "that what interests me is to win the game itself, the excitement and the perils. And I have been behind the scenes many times."

"I believe it," he said abruptly. "I should like to hear ——"

"I am a woman who keeps the secrets of others and her own," she answered, interrupting his question.

"And if you marry?" he said curiously.

"Even then,"— she dismissed the return to the personal with the first quick movement of her hand and continued,—"I should say, you are the best hated man in Wall Street."

"That's not exactly inside information."

"'ARE YOU PLANNING TO MARRY ME?' HE ASKED"

"No one is going to come to your help out of friendship."

"True."

"If Majendie and the Atlantic Trust Company fail, nothing in this world can pull you through," she said, seeking in some uncontrolled movement of his an answer to the statement that was in reality a question.

From the moment she had begun to question him, he experienced a sudden change. He was no longer dealing with a woman, but with an element he had outguessed a hundred times.

All at once an odd idea came to him which struck him as stupendously ridiculous, and yet made him glower in covert admiration at the woman who watched him while seemingly engaged with the rearrangement of her draperies.

"Is it possible, after all," he thought, "that that ambitious little head is playing with both Majendie and me, and that she is setting her cap for the survivor?"

He came back, reseated himself, and said, with an appearance of candor which would have deceived most people:

"You say Majendie is coming here to-night?"

"Yes."

"Do you know where he is this afternoon?"

"Yes."

"And the object of his visit?"

"The object is easy to guess," she said indifferently. "You know perfectly well that he is in conference with Fontaine, Marx, and Gunther, and what you wish to know is whether they are going to stand aside and let him sink. Are you ready to answer my two questions?"

"And when will you know if he has failed or succeeded?"

"To-night."

"He will tell you?"

"I shall know to-night," she said, with an evasive smile.

"What's your private opinion?"

"They will come to his assistance," she said carefully.

"Because they are his personal friends," he said, with an accent of raillery.

"Naturally."

"You believe Majendie will pull through?"

"I do." She looked at him a moment, and asked the question, not so much to receive an answer as to judge from his manner: "Can the Associated Trust meet its obligations on Wednesday without assistance?"

"I can," he said quietly, and to himself he added: "There — if Majendie has set her to pump me, little good that'll do him."

"But if the Atlantic Trust Company shuts its doors," she persisted, "you are caught?"

"That is the general opinion."

"Will you fail?"

"You want a direct answer?"

"Yes."

"No."

She was quiet a moment, dissatisfied, looked away from him and then said:

"So you don't care to know what I shall learn to-night?"

"My dear lady, I won't tell you a thing," he said, with a laugh, "so stop trying. Leave us to fight our own battles. Plot all you want in your cunning head your little feminine plans, but don't get beyond your depth."

"I see you believe I'm interested in Majendie," she said, with a shrug of her shoulders. "You are not very well informed."

"No," he said bluntly; "you are interested in no one but Rita Kildair. I know that much." He rose, took several strides back and forth, and, returning, stood by her. "I hate allies," he said; "I prefer to consider you as a woman."

His remark brought a sharp gleam of curiosity to her eyes, a spark of instinctive sex antagonism that flashed and disappeared.

"Remember, I have warned you," she said, retiring as abruptly into the feline languor of her pose.

He stood, swayed by two emotions, the purely gentle, almost caressing effect her indolence brought him, and the desire to establish some sudden empire over her — to feel his strength above hers.

"What's the weak point in your armor?" he said savagely.

"I wouldn't tell you."

"I think I know one."

"Really?"

He drew his chair still closer, and, leaning over, touched with his stubby forefinger the rings on her outstretched hand.

"Jewels?" she said, smiling.

"Yes."

"Any woman is the same."

"Why?"

"I don't know — it is so," she said, and, raising the deep lusters, she allowed her glance to rest on them as in a dream of opium.

He drew from his pocket the ring with the ruby, and held it out.

"Try this on."

She took it between her finger-tips slowly, looking at him with a glance that was a puzzled frown, and slipped it on her finger. Then she extended her hand gradually to the full length of her white arm against the purple, and half closed her eyes. There was no outward sign; only a deep breath went through her, as though an immense change had taken place in the inner woman.

"Now I know what I want to know," he said, watching her closely with almost an animal joy in this sudden revelation of an appetite in her.

"It's a wonderful stone," she said in a whisper; then she drew it off her finger slowly, as though the flesh rebelled, and held it out to him, turning away her eyes.

"Keep it."

She raised her eyes and looked at him steadily.

"You are cleverer than I thought," she said.

"Keep it."

"Is this for information about Majendie?" she said slowly.

"Not for that."

"For what, then?" she said steadily.

"For a whim."

"Thanks; I don't trust your whims."

For all reply, he took her hand and again placed the ring on it.

"Wear it," he said.

She turned the stone quickly inside her palm as though unable to endure its lure, and looked at him profoundly.

"*Are* you going to pull through?" she said angrily.

"Will it make a difference?" he asked, rising, with a quick glance at his watch.

She rose in her turn, facing him with a sudden energy.

"Do you know the one great mistake you have made?"

"What?"

"You have condemned yourself to success."

"What do you mean by that?" he said.

"You must always succeed, and that is terrible! At the first defeat every one will be up in arms against you — because every one wants to see you ruined."

"Every one?" he said, looking in her eyes.

A second time she took off the ring and gave it to him, and as he protested she said coldly:

"Don't make me angry. The comedy has been amusing. Enough. Also, don't trouble yourself about my motives. I haven't the slightest intention of marrying you or any one else."

And she accompanied the words with a gesture so imperative that, amazed at the change, he no longer insisted. As he put out his hand, she said suddenly, as if obeying an intuition:

"I will tell you what you want to know. Gunther is almost sure to come to Majendie's aid. I know it by a woman. Take care of yourself."

"And I will tell you exactly the opposite," he said, bluffing. "Gunther will not lend a cent; Majendie will go under, and I'll pull through."

"You'll pull through even if the Atlantic Trust closes?"

"Exactly."

"Good-by," she said, with a shrug.

"Remember what I said," he repeated, and went out.

Five minutes later the bell rang, and Kiki brought her a little box and an envelop. She recognized Slade's writing, and read:

Dear Lady:

Apologies for my rudeness. If you won't accept a gift, at least wear the ring for a week. I should like to know what effect it could have on your cold little soul. Oblige my curiosity. It's only a little reparation for the disappointment I gave you. J. G. S.

"Decidedly, he is cleverer than I thought," she said musingly. In the box was the great ruby ring. She took it up, examined it carefully, made a motion as though to replace it in the box, and then suddenly slipped it on her finger.

CHAPTER II

MRS. KILDAIR knew pretty nearly every one in that indescribable society of New York which is drawn from all levels, without classification, and imposes but one condition for membership — to be amusing. Her home, in fact, supplied that need of all limited and contending superimposed sets, a central meeting-ground where one entered under the protection of a flag of truce and departed without obligations. She knew every one, and no one knew her. No one knew beyond the vaguest rumors her history or her resources. No one had ever met a Mr. Kildair. There was always about her a certain defensive reserve the moment the limit of acquaintanceship had been touched. Mrs. Enos Bloodgood, who saw her most and gave her the fullest confidence, knew no more than that she had arrived from Paris five years before, with letters of introduction from the best quarters. Her invitations were eagerly sought by leaders of fashionable society, prima donnas, artists, visiting European aristocrats, and men of the moment. Her dinners were spontaneous, and the discussions, though gay and usually daring, were invariably under the control of wit and good taste.

As soon as Slade's present had been received she passed into the dining-room to assure herself that everything was in readiness for the informal chafing-dish supper to which she had invited some of her most congenial friends, all of whom, as much as could be said of any one, were habitués of the studio. Then, entering her Louis Quinze bedroom, which exhaled a pleasant stirring atmosphere of perfume, she slipped off her filmy purple tea-gown and chose an evening robe of absolute black, of warm velvet, unrelieved by any color, but which gave to her shoulders and arms that softness and brilliancy which no color can impart.

Several times she halted, and, seating herself at her dressing-table, fell into a fascinated contemplation of the great ruby that trembled luminously on her finger like a bubble of scarlet blood. When, in the act of deftly ordering the masses of her dark ruddy hair, her white fingers lost themselves among the tresses, she stopped more than once, entranced at the brilliancy of the stone against the white flesh and the sudden depths of her hair. She rose and began to move about the room; but her hand from time to time continued its coquetries above her forehead, as though the ring had suddenly added to her feminine treasury a new instinctive gesture.

At half past seven, having finished dressing, she opened the doors which made a thoroughfare between the studio and the small dining-room, and passed into the larger room, where, at one end, Kiki had brought forth three Sheraton tables, joined them, and set them with crystal and silver.

"Put in order my bedroom," she said, with an approving nod, "and then you can go."

She moved about the studio, studying the arrangements of the furniture, seeing always from the tail of her eye the scarlet spot on her finger.

"I wonder what it's worth," she said softly. "Ten, fifteen thousand at the least." She held the ring from her, gazing at it dreamily. "I wonder what woman's eye has looked upon you, you wonderful gem," she whispered; and, as though transported with the vision of the past, she drew it slowly toward her and pressed her lips against it.

At this moment a buzz sounded from the hall, and she recovered herself hastily and, a little ashamed, said with a feeling of alarm as she went to the door:

"Slade is entirely too clever; I must send it back to-morrow morning."

Before she could reach the door it had opened, and there entered, with the informality of assured acquaintance, a young man of twenty-five or -six, smiling, boyish, delighted at having stolen a march on the other guests.

"You are early," said Mrs. Kildair, smiling with instinctive reflection of the roguish enjoyment that shone on his handsome, confident face.

"Heavens, haven't I been beating the pavements for fourteen minutes by the watch!" he said, laughing. "Regular kid trick." He took her hand, carrying it to his lips. "The way they do in France, you know."

"You're a nice boy, Teddy," she said, patting his hand. "Now, hang up your coat, and help me with the candles."

She watched him as he slipped his overcoat from the trim wide shoulders, revealing all at once the clean-cut, well tailored figure, full of elasticity and youth. Teddy Beecher always gave her a sense of well being and pleasant content, with his harum-scarum ways and inviting impudence. As he roused no intellectual resistance in her, she was all the more sensitive to the purely physical charm in him, which she appreciated as she might appreciate the finely strung body and well modulated limbs of a Perseus by Benvenuto Cellini.

"Will I help you? Command me," he said, coming in eagerly. "Don't you know, there's a little silver collar about my neck, and the inscription is, 'This dog belongs to Rita Kildair.' Jove, Rita, but you're stunning to-night!"

He stood stock-still in frank amazement. He had known her but a short while, and yet he called her by her first name — a liberty seldom accorded; but the charm he unconsciously exerted over women, and which impatiently mystified other men, was in the very audacity of his enjoyment of life, which imparted to women the precious sense of their own youth.

"Really?" she said, raising her hand to her hair, that he might notice the glorious ruby.

"Look here — I've only got a miserable thirty thousand a year, but I've got a couple of uncles with liver trouble and a bum heart. Say the word — I'm yours."

While he said it with a mock-heroic air, there was in his eyes a flash of excited admiration that she understood and was well pleased with.

"Come, Teddy," she said, a little disappointed that he did not perceive the ring. "To work. Take this taper."

He took the wax, contriving to touch her fingers with feigned artlessness.

"I say, Rita, who's the mob here to-night? Do I know any one? I get the place next to you, of course?"

"Begin over there," she directed. "The Enos Bloodgoods are coming; you've met her here."

"I thought they were separated, or something."

"Not yet."

"By George, Rita, there's no one like you — serving us up a couple on the verge."

"That is not all — I like situations," she said, with her slow smile.

"I like Elise; but as for the old boy, he can slip on a banana peel and break his neck, for all I care."

"Then there's a broker, Garraboy, Elise's brother."

"Don't know him."

"Maud Lille, who's written clever books — a journalist."

"Don't know her — hate clever women."

"Nan Charters ——"

"Who?" said Beecher, with upraised wick.

"Nan Charters, who played in 'Monsieur Beaucaire.'"

"Bully!"

She smiled at his impetuousness, and continued: "Mr. Majendie and the Stanley Cheevers."

"Oh, I say — not those ——"

"Well?" she said as he stopped.

"You know the gambling story," he said reluctantly.

"Club gossip."

"Of course," he said, correcting himself. "One of my friends was present. The Cheevers play a good game, a well united game, and have an unusual system of makes. They are very successful — let it go at that. You don't mean to say that Majendie'll be here?"

"I expect him."

"He was a friend of the dad's — a corker, too. I don't know much about those things, but isn't he supposed to be up against it?"

Three knocks in close succession sounded on the outer door, and Garraboy entered with an air of familiarity that was displeasing to the younger man. The two saluted impertinently, with polite antagonism, detesting each other from the first look.

"Go on with the candles, Teddy," said Mrs. Kildair, signaling to the newcomer, a young man of forty who seemed to have been born bald, wrinkled, and heavy-eyed. The long, bald head on the thin, straight little body, and the elongated white collar, gave him somewhat the look of an interrogation-mark. He was heavily perfumed.

"What's the news of the market?" she asked.

"Another odd turn — went up a couple of points," he said, looking at her hand. Unlike Beecher, he had instantly noted the new acquisition with a malicious smile. His thumb gave a little jerk and he added softly: "Something new?"

"Yes. Why should the market go up?" she said, seeming to be intent only on the effect of the bracketed candles, that now licked the tapestried walls with their restless tongues.

"There's a general belief that a group of the big fellows will stand behind the trust companies in return for certain concessions. I say," he continued, watching the ruby ring, which instinctively she tried to conceal from him, "I hope Elise isn't going to make a fool of herself about Majendie."

"Teddy, Teddy, you've forgotten the two over the plaque!" she said aloud — and, a little lower: "She won't; don't fear."

"I know her better," he said, without, however, betraying the slightest brotherly agitation. "She is apt to do something crazy if anything went wrong with Majendie. Bloodgood's a hard-skinned old brute, but if there was anything public he'd cut up ugly."

"I hear he's in the market."

"Yes — on the short side, too — in deep."

"And you?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"I thought we never told secrets, Mrs. Kildair. Who else is coming? Am I representing the element of respectability again to-night?"

"The what?" She looked at him steadily until he turned away nervously, with the unease of an animal. "Don't be an ass with me, my dear Garraboy."

"By George," he said irritably, "if this were Europe I'd wager you were in the Secret Service, Mrs. Kildair."

"Thank you," she said, smiling appreciatively, and returned toward young Beecher, who was waiting by the piano with ill concealed resentment.

The Stanley Cheevers entered — a short, chubby man with a bleached, vacant face tufted with mustache and imperial, devoid of eyebrows, with watery eyes that moved slowly with the motion of his gourdlike head; Mrs. Cheever voluble, nervous, overdressed, young with the youth of a child and pretty with the prettiness of a doll.

Beecher, who knew them, bowed with a sense of curiosity to Mrs. Cheever, who held him a little with a certain trick she had of opening wide her dark, Oriental eyes; and dropped, with a sense of physical discomfort, the hand that Cheever flabbily pressed into his.

"Decidedly, I am going to have a grand little time by myself," he said moodily. "Where the deuce does Rita pick up this bunch?"

The Enos Bloodgoods were still agitated as they entered. His lips had not quite banished the scowl, nor her eyes the scorn.

"Permit me, my dear," he said, taking off her wrap, and the words struck those who heard them with a sudden chill.

He was of the unrelenting type that never loses its temper, but causes others to lose theirs, immovable in his opinions, with a prowling walk, a studied antagonism in his manner, while in his bulgy eyes was an impudent stare which fastened itself like a leech on the person addressed, to draw out his weakness.

Elise Bloodgood, who seemed tied to her husband by an invisible leash, had a hunted, resisting quality back of a certain desperate dash which she assumed, rather than felt, in her attitude toward society — just as she touched with red, cheeks that were meant to be simply the background of eyes that were extraordinary, with a lurking sense of tragedy.

"Rita dear, I am almost frantic to-night," she said hastily, in one of those intimate moments of which women avail themselves in the midst of their enemies.

"The last rumors are good," said Mrs. Kildair, bending over her ostensibly to arrange her scarf.

"Who told you?"

"Your brother. Every one downtown believes the panic is stopped. The market has gone up. Gunther and Snelling are Bernard's personal friends."

"Friends?" she said bitterly. "Yes, that's just the trouble."

"Besides, he is coming to-night — you knew?"

"Yes, I knew," said Mrs. Bloodgood, with a glance at her husband, who, at the other side of the studio, seemed intent only on examining a reliquary in carved stone.

"Then he will tell you himself," said Mrs. Kildair, rearranging a little ornament that made a splash of gold on the black hair of her companion. "Be careful — don't talk too much now."

"What do I care?" she said rebelliously. "It has got to end sometime."

She passed her husband, her dark shoulder flinching unconsciously at his near presence, and gave her hand to Stanley Cheever and young Beecher, who, though utterly unconscious of the entanglements of the evening, was struck by the moody sadness in her eyes that so strangely contradicted the laugh that was on her lips. But as he was wondering, a little constrained, how best to open the conversation, the door opened once more and two women entered — Nan Charters, who arrived like a little white cloud, vibrantly alert and pleased at the stir her arrival occasioned, and Maud Lille, who appeared behind her as a shadow, very straight, very dark, Indian in her gliding movements, with masses of somber hair held in a little too loosely for neatness.

"Oh, dear, am I dreadfully late?" said Nan Charters, who swept into the studio the better to display her opera-cloak, a gorgeous combination of white and gold Japanese embroideries, which, mounting above her throat in conjunction with a scarf of mingling pinks, revealed only the tip of her vivacious nose and sparkling eyes.

"You are strangely early," said Mrs. Kildair, who presented Beecher with a gesture which at the same time directed him to attend to the wraps.

"Thank you," said Miss Charters, with a quick smile, and by an imperceptible motion she allowed the cloak to slip from her shoulders and glide into his waiting hands, revealing herself in a white satin shot with pigeon red, which caused the eyes of all the women present to focus suddenly. Garraboy, Cheever, and Bloodgood, who knew her, came up eagerly.

Teddy Beecher, his arms crowded with the elusive garment, which gave him almost the feeling of a human body, bore it to the hall and arranged it with care, pleasantly aware of the perfume it exhaled. He returned eagerly, conscious of the instantaneous impression her smile had made on him as she turned to thank him, a look that had challenged and aroused him. She was still chatting gaily, surrounded by the three men, and he was forced to occupy himself with Mrs. Bloodgood. His eyes, however, remained on the young girl, who was listening with unaffected pleasure to the compliments of her male audience. Something in the chivalry of the younger man revolted at the spectacle of the sophisticated Garraboy and the worldly appetites in the eyes of Cheever and Bloodgood. He felt almost an uneasy sense of her peril, which was in effect an instinctive emotion of jealousy, and, profiting by the moment in which Mrs. Bloodgood turned to Miss Lille, he slipped to Miss Charters' side and contrived to isolate her.

The studio was now filled with chatter. Mrs. Kildair passed from group to group, animating it with a word or two. With the exception of Teddy Beecher and Nan Charters, in the several groups there was but one question — the events of the day in the financial world and the probable outcome of the secret conference at Gunther's.

Every one watched the clock, awaiting the last arrival with an impatience that was too truly founded on the safety of their personal fortunes to be concealed.

"The conference ended at six-thirty," said Maud Lille to Bloodgood and Cheever; "Majendie left for his house immediately after. I had it from the city editor on the telephone."

"Was any statement given out?" said Cheever, who put one finger to his lip, as he did when a little nervous.

"None."

"If he goes under, it means the bottom out of the market," said Cheever, fixing his owlish stare on Bloodgood's smug face.

"Are you long?" said Bloodgood, turning on him with curiosity.

"A thousand shares," said Cheever, but in a tone that carried no conviction.

"He won't come," said Maud Lille obstinately.

"If he does," said Cheever slowly, "he's pulled through and the market ought to go up." And a second time his finger jerked up to his lips, with the gesture of the stutterer.

"He won't come," repeated Maud Lille.

Bloodgood gave her a short look, trying to fathom the reason of her belief, a question he did not care to put before Cheever.

At this moment Majendie appeared at the entrance of the studio. The conversation, which had been mounting in nervous staccatos, fell with the hollowness that one sometimes feels in the air before the first crash of a storm. By an uncontrollable impulse, each turned, eager to read in the first indication some clue to his personal fate.

The last arrival had opened the outer door unheard, and, profiting by the commotion, had removed his overcoat and hat in the ante-room.

When the rest of the party perceived him, Majendie was standing erect and smiling under the Turkish lamp that, hanging from the balcony, cast a mellow light on his genial, aristocratic forehead. In every detail, from the ruddy, delicately veined cheeks and white mustache to the slight, finely shaped figure at ease in the evening coat that fitted him as a woman's ball gown, he radiated the patrician, but the patrician of urbanity, tact, and generous impulses.

"My dear hostess," he said at once, bending over Mrs. Kildair's hand with a little extra formality, "a thousand excuses for keeping you and your guests waiting. But just at present there are quite a number of persons who seem to be determined to keep me from my engagements. Am I forgiven?"

"Yes," she answered, with a sudden feeling of admiration for the air of absolute good humor with which he pronounced these words, mystifying though they were to her sense of divination.

"I think I know every one," he said, glancing around without a trace of emotion at Bloodgood and Cheever, whose presence could not have failed to be distasteful. "You are very good to be so lenient, and I will accept whatever penance you impose. Are we going to have one of those delightful chafing-dish suppers that only you know how to provide?"

"What pride!" she murmured to herself, as he passed over to Miss Charters with a compliment that made her and Beecher break out laughing.

Up to the moment, the group had found not the slightest indication of the probable outcome of the afternoon's conference. If anything, there was in his carriage a quiet exhilaration. But the moment was approaching when he must come face to face with Mrs. Bloodgood, who, either in order to gain time for the self-control that seemed almost beyond her, or that she might draw him into more immediate converse, had withdrawn so as to be the last he should greet. Majendie perceived instantly the imprudence of the manoeuver, and by a word addressed to Mrs. Kildair, who followed at his side, contrived to bring himself to the farther side of the group, of which little Mrs. Cheever and Garraboy were the other two.

"I make my excuses to the ladies first," he said, with a nod to Garraboy, whom he thus was enabled to pass. He offered his hand to Mrs. Bloodgood, saying: "Grant me absolution, and I promise to do everything I can to make you as gay as I feel now."

Elise Bloodgood took his hand, glancing into his face with a startled glance, and immediately withdrew, murmuring something inaudible.

Mrs. Kildair, who with every one had been listening to his words for the double meaning that seemed to be conveyed, stepped in front of Mrs. Bloodgood to cover her too evident agitation.

"Elise," she said sharply, pressing her hand, "get hold of yourself. You must! Everything is all right. Didn't you understand him?"

"Ah, if he were going to die to-morrow he would never tell me," said Mrs. Bloodgood, pressing her handkerchief against her lips. "Nothing will ever break through his pride."

"But he told you in so many words," said Mrs. Kildair — who, however, didn't believe what she said.

"He told me nothing — nothing!"

"You must control yourself," said Mrs. Kildair, alarmed at her emotion.

"What do I care?"

"But you must! Listen. When I go into the dining-room don't follow me. I will contrive to take your husband with me. Profit by the chance. Besides, you are in no state to judge. Does Bernard look like a man who has just been told he is ruined? Come, a little courage."

She left her and, stepping into her bedroom, donned a Watteau-like cooking-apron, and, slipping her rings from her fingers, fixed the three on her pin-cushion with a hatpin. From the mirror in which she surveyed herself she could see the interior of the studio — Nan Charters' laughing face above the piano, where she was running off a succession of topical songs, surrounded by a chorus of men, while Beecher, at her side, solicitously turned the pages.

"Teddy seems quite taken," she thought. But the tensity of the drama drove from her all other considerations. Completely mystified by Majendie's manner, she was studying the moment when she could throw him together with Elise Bloodgood, convinced that from the woman she would learn what the man concealed.

"Your rings are beautiful, dear, beautiful,"

"'HE WON'T COME,' SHE SAID OBSTINATELY. 'IF HE DOES,' SAID CHEEVER SLOWLY, 'HE'S PULLED
UNCONTROLLABLE IMPULSE, EVERY PERSON

THROUGH.' AT THIS MOMENT MAJENDIE APPEARED AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE STUDIO. BY AN IN THE ROOM TURNED TOWARD HIM"

said the deep voice of Maud Lille, who, with Garraboy and Mrs. Cheever, were in the room.

"I never saw the ruby before," said Mrs. Cheever in a nervous voice. "My dear, you are the most mysterious woman in the world. Think of having a ring like that, and never wearing it!"

"It is a wonderful stone," said Mrs. Kildair, touching with her thin fingers the ring that lay uppermost.

"It is beautiful — very beautiful," said the journalist, her eyes fastened on it with an uncontrollable fascination.

Mrs. Cheever, her lips parted, her black eyes wide with eagerness, leaned over. She put out her fingers and let them rest caressingly on the ruby, withdrawing them as though the contact had burned them, while on either cheek little spots of red excitement showed.

"It must be very valuable," she said, her breath catching slightly.

Garraboy, moving forward, suddenly looked at the ring.

"Yes, it is valuable — very much so," said Mrs. Kildair, glancing down. Then she went to the door that led into the studio, and clapped her hands:

"Attention, everybody! Beecher and Garraboy are the chefs. Each one must choose his scullery-maid. Mr. Majendie is to make the punch. Every one else is butler and waitress. Mrs. Cheever, did you ever peel onions?"

"Good heavens, no!" said Mrs. Cheever, delicately recoiling.

"Well, there are no onions to peel," said Mrs. Kildair, laughing. "All you have to do is to carry dishes or make the toast — on to the kitchen!"

"Miss Charters, you are engaged at any salary you may name," said Beecher, forestalling Garraboy, who was coming forward.

"But I shall drop every dish," said Nan Charters, rising from the piano. "I don't know anything about cooking."

"Splendid! Then you'll make no mistakes."

He installed her at one end of the table, and went off for the chafing-dish. When he returned, gingerly balancing it on a silver platter, Garraboy, profiting by his absence, was seated beside Nan Charters, speaking in a purposely low voice. She was listening, perfectly composed, looking straight before her with a tolerant, uninterested smile.

If women often can conceal their true natures from women, men seldom deceive one another. There was a fixity in Garraboy's glance which Beecher understood and hotly resented. But at the moment when, setting the tray on the table, he was meditating some ill advised remark, Mrs. Cheever, passing by, said with ill concealed impatience in her thin, hurried voice:

"Mr. Garraboy, I am sorry for you, but I have been assigned as your assistant, and I should like to know what I am to do."

Garraboy rose immediately, bowed with perfect suavity, and rejoined Mrs. Cheever, who said to him something that the others did not hear, but at which they saw him shrug his shoulders.

"Well, what are we going to make?" said Nan Charters, with the enjoyment that this exhibition of feminine jealousy had brought still in her eyes.

"I don't like Garraboy," said Beecher directly.

"Why not?" she said, smiling a little, and raising her eyebrows as though interrogating a child.

"Because I like you," he answered abruptly.

Accustomed to contend with men, she was surprised by the genuineness of his remark, which was inspired by a sentiment deeper than jealousy. She looked at him again with that sudden second estimate which is vital.

"He is not difficult to handle," she said carelessly, unaware of the touch of intimacy which her reply permitted.

"I don't like him," he said obstinately, "and I don't like his crowd — the crowd that is here to-night. They're like a pack of wolves. What the deuce does Rita see in them?"

"Mrs. Kildair has generally, I should say, a very good reason for whom she invites," she said carelessly.

"But these Cheevers — they're impossible. How the deuce do they live?"

"I thought Mr. Majendie very charming."

"Oh, Majendie — yes, I except him," he said enthusiastically. "He's a gentleman."

"That counts a good deal with you?" she said, with a touch of raillery.

"It does. I think a gentleman is almost the rarest thing you meet with to-day," he said, holding his ground, "a gentleman in the heart. I know only four or five."

"Yes, you are right," she said, changing her tone. She looked at him a third time, at the honest, boyish loyalty so plainly written on his face, and said: "You haven't gone out much here?"

"No; I'm just back from knocking around the world, hunting in Africa and all that sort of uselessness."

"Come and tell me about it sometime."

"May I?"

She laughed at his impetuousness, and pointed to the contents of the chafing-dish, which had been simmering neglected; but more

than once during the operation her glance returned to the eager, earnest face.

Meanwhile, Garraboy, at the other end of the table, assisted by Mrs. Cheever and Maud Lille, was busy with a lobster à la Newburg. Mrs. Kildair, having finished in the kitchen, had entered the dining-room, where she established a sort of provisional serving-table. She called to her side Cheever and Bloodgood, and, under the pretext of arranging the dishes from the china-closet, kept them isolated. At this moment Elise Bloodgood approached Majendie, who, at the rear end of the studio, was occupied with the brewing of a punch. Natural as was the movement, it was instantly perceived by the four or five persons vitally interested. A moment afterward Mrs. Bloodgood passed into the bedroom; but there was in her carriage a triumph that she did not care to conceal.

"He's won out," thought Bloodgood.

"The shorts will be caught," thought Cheever. "The devil! I must cover."

"Has he lied to her?" said Mrs. Kildair to herself. "If everything is all right, why should he conceal it from any one?"

She went across the room, stopping at the punch-table.

"Have you everything you need?" she asked.

"Everything, thank you," Majendie answered gently; but there was in his voice a tired note, as if some effort had suddenly exhausted him.

"I understood what you meant," she said, looking at him not without a little pity — an emotion which was rare with her. "Let me congratulate you on the result of this afternoon."

"Thank you very much for your congratulations," he said quietly, taking her hand. "If you knew, you will understand why I was kept so late."

As he bowed, the front of his jacket opening a little, she saw or fancied she saw in the inner pocket a strip of green, slightly protruding. She left him, still unconvinced, and turned to the company.

"Everything ready, Teddy? All right. Every one sit down. Mrs. Cheever and Mrs. Bloodgood are appointed butlers — because real work will do them good. Sit down, sit down. I'll be back in a minute."

As she turned to her bedroom, there came a strong ring, twice repeated. She paused, astonished.

"Who can that be?" she thought, frowning, and directing her steps toward the ante-chamber. "No one is allowed to come up. It must be a telegram."

She opened the door, and Slade entered.

"I came right up," he said directly, "because I had no success on the telephone. You rather excited my curiosity this afternoon. Please invite me to your party."

The first moment of irritation was succeeded, on her part, by the feeling of elation. The impulse that had brought Slade so unexpectedly there was a feeling of jealousy, in which Beecher and Majendie were confusedly mixed.

"He wishes to watch me with his own eyes," she said triumphantly. "Very well; he shall be well punished."

Slade's arrival produced a moment of profound astonishment. Bloodgood and Maud Lille exchanged quick glances, believing the meeting between Majendie and Slade had been premeditated. Garraboy plucked Cheever nervously by the sleeve, while Majendie, as if realizing that he was dealing with an antagonist of a different caliber, rose with a little nervous inflation of the chest. Rapid as had been the interim in the ante-chamber, Mrs. Kildair had had time to say:

"Majendie is here. Do you know what happened this afternoon?"

"I do," said Slade, with malicious enjoyment, and he added: "Do you?"

"Yes," she replied, convinced, likewise, of the falsity of his statement. Then aloud she added: "Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Slade, an impromptu guest."

She passed with him about the table, introducing him where it was necessary. Slade and Majendie did not offer hands; each bowed with a quiet, measured politeness. On the contrary, when Beecher was reached, the older man grasped the hand of the younger, and held it a moment with a grip that, despite Beecher's own strength, made him wince.

"Teddy, be a good boy and place Mr. Slade somewhere," she said, resting her hand purposely on the young man's shoulder. "I'll take off my apron and be back immediately."

She stopped near Majendie, who had returned to the punch-table for an extra glass, and, seeing that her movements were followed by Slade, said:

"Bernard, believe me, I did not plan it. I had no idea he was coming."

"It makes not the slightest difference," he said instantly. "Mr. Slade and I have no quarrel. Please don't worry about me."

"You're an awfully good sort," she said abruptly.

"That is high praise from you," he said, with a little critical smile which showed he was not entirely the dupe of her manoeuvers.

She went into her bedroom, and, divesting herself of her apron, hung it in the closet. Then, going to her dressing-table, she drew the hatpin

from the pin-cushion and carelessly slipped the rings on her fingers. All at once she frowned and looked quickly at her hand. Only two rings were there. The third one — the ring with the ruby — was gone.

CHAPTER III

HER first emotion was of irritation.

"How stupid!" she said to herself, and, returning to her dressing-table, began to search among the silver and ivory boxes. All at once she stopped. She remembered with a vivid flash putting the pin through the three rings.

She made no further search, but remained without moving, her fingers slowly tapping the table, her head inclined, her lips drawn in a little between her teeth, watching in the glass the crowded table reflected from the outer studio.

In that gay party, one person was the thief — but which one? Each guest had had a dozen opportunities in the course of the time she had been in the kitchen.

"Too much prinking, pretty lady," called out Garraboy, who, from where he was seated, could see her.

"Not he," she said quickly. Then she reconsidered: "Why not? He's shifty — who knows? Let me think."

To gain time, she went slowly back to the kitchen, her head bowed, her thumb between her teeth.

"Who has taken it?"

She ran over the characters of her guests and their situations as she knew them. Strangely enough, with the exception of Beecher and Majendie, at each her mind stopped upon some reason that might explain a sudden temptation.

"And even Majendie — if he is bankrupt or running away," she thought. "No, I shall find out nothing this way. That is not the important thing just now. The important thing is to get the ring back. But how?"

All at once she realized the full disaster of the situation. Slade would never believe her; and yet, how was it possible to admit before others who had lent her the ring?

"What could I say to him?" she thought desperately. "No, no; I must have the ring back, whatever happens. I won't give him that hold. I must get it back — some way — somehow."

And mechanically, deliberately, she continued to pace back and forth, her clenched hand beating the deliberate, rhythmic measure of her journey.

In the studio, meanwhile, under the gay leadership of Majendie and Nan Charters, the spirits of the company began to rise. The rival chefs were surrounded by anxious admirers, who shouted laughing instructions or protested with mock agony against the shower of red pepper.

The ceremony had served to bring Beecher and Nan Charters on terms of sympathetic familiarity. The young actress had the secret of what is meant by that much abused word — charm. Her vivacious movements were all charming. The eagerness with which her eyes seized the excitement of the moment, the soft and yet animated tones of her voice, the most casual gesture she made, or the most evident reply, all seemed invested with a peculiar charm which was at the same time a delight in pleasure and a happiness in the consciousness of pleasing.

Beecher did not or could not conceal the empire she had so suddenly acquired over his imagination, while Nan Charters, quite aware of what was happening, laughingly provoked him further, a little excited beyond the emotions of an ordinary flirtation.

During the progress of this personal duel, which, however, every one perceived with different emotions, Slade, placed at the middle of the table, followed only the expressions of Bernard Majendie, his scrutiny at times becoming so insistently profound that the banker several times noticed it with a swift glance of annoyed interrogation, which, however, did not alter in the least the fixity of the other's gaze.

Meanwhile, two or three conversations, expressed in snatched phrases, took place between those whose interests in the stock market were put in jeopardy by the mystery as to Majendie's fate.

"There'll be a rush of the shorts to cover to-morrow, if this is true," said Cheever in a low whisper to his wife. "Pump Mrs. Bloodgood all you can."

"How quick do you suppose they'll give the news out?" said Bloodgood to Garraboy. "It means a buying movement as soon as they do."

"Any paper may have the news to-morrow," said the broker, and the glass that he took from the punch-table shook as he raised it.

"Do you think Slade knows?"

"I'm not sure — but I think he does," said Garraboy carefully. "Better meet me at the Waldorf at eleven. I'll get another line on it by then."

"Why the deuce should he pull through?" said Bloodgood, with a quick, dull fury.

Garraboy, with his malicious smile, perceiving that Bloodgood's hatred was purely financial, chuckled to himself, took a couple of glasses in rapid succession, and returned to the table under perfect control, not without a scowl

at the other end of the table, where Nan Charters and young Beecher were laughingly disputing the possession of the pepper-shaker.

A moment later, as Mrs. Cheever was exclaiming at their hostess' prolonged delay to Garraboy, who was dipping into the lobster à la Newburg, which he was preparing to serve, Mrs. Kildair slipped into the room like a lengthening shadow. Her entrance had been made with scarcely a perceptible sound, and yet each guest was aware of it, at the same moment, with the same uncontrollable nervous start.

"Heavens, dear lady," exclaimed Garraboy, with a twitch of his arms. "You come in on us like a Greek tragedy. What is the surprise?"

As he spoke, Beecher, looking up, saw her turn suddenly on him, drawing her forehead together until the eyebrows ran in a straight line.

"I have something to say to you all," she said in a quiet, discordant voice, while her eyes ran restlessly through the company with a predatory sharpness.

There was no mistaking the gravity in her voice. Garraboy extinguished the oil-lamp, covering the chafing-dish clumsily with a disagreeable tinny sound; Mrs. Cheever and Mrs. Bloodgood swung about abruptly; Maud Lille rose a little from her seat; Nan Charters, dramatically sensitive, seized unconsciously the arm of young Beecher; while the men, with the exception of Slade, who still watched Majendie like a terrier, imitated their movements of expectancy with a clumsy shuffling of the feet.

"Mr. Bloodgood."

"Yes, Mrs. Kildair?"

"Kindly do as I ask."

"Certainly."

She had spoken his name with a peremptory positiveness that was almost an accusation. He rose, placing his napkin carefully at the side of his plate, raising his short eyebrows a little in surprise.

"Go to the vestibule," she continued, immediately shifting her glance from him to the others. "Are you there? Shut the sliding doors that lead into the studio. Lock them. Bring me the key."

He executed the order without bungling, while the company, in growing amazement, fascinated, watched his squat figure returning with the key.

"You've locked it?" she said, making the question an excuse to bury her glance in his.

"As you wished me to."

"Thanks."

She took from him the key, and, shifting slightly, likewise locked the door into her bedroom through which she had come.

Then, transferring the keys to her left hand, seemingly unaware of Bloodgood, who still composedly awaited her further instructions, her eyes studied a moment the possibilities of the apartment and then returned to her guests.

"Mr. Cheever," she said abruptly.

"Yes, Mrs. Kildair."

"Put out all the candles except the candelabrum on the table."

"Put out the lights?" he said, rising, with his peculiar nervous movement of the fingers to the lips.

"At once."

Mr. Cheever, in rising, met the glance of his wife, and the look of questioning and wonder that passed did not escape the others.

"But, my dear Mrs. Kildair," cried Nan Charters, with a little nervous catch of her breath, "what is it? I'm getting terribly worked up."

"Miss Lille," said Mrs. Kildair's undeviating voice of command, while Beecher placed his hand firmly over his companion's, which had begun to open and shut in nervous tension.

The journalist, more composed than the rest, had watched the proceedings from that shadowy calm which had made her presence almost unnoticed. Now, as though forewarned by professional instinct that something sensational was hanging on the moment, she rose quietly with almost a stealthy motion.

"Put the candelabrum on this table — here," said Mrs. Kildair, after a long moment's confrontation. She indicated the large round table on which the punch-bowl was set. "No, wait. Mr. Bloodgood, first clear off the table, cover and all; I want nothing on it."

As Bloodgood started to remove the punch-bowl, Majendie rose quickly and took the heavy candelabrum from the hands of Maud Lille, saying:

"Permit me; that's rather heavy for you."

"But, Mrs. Kildair —" began Mrs. Cheever's voice, in shrill crescendo.

Mrs. Kildair, as though satisfied by her examination of the journalist, nodded to Majendie, and, perceiving the mahogany table clear, said without notice of Mrs. Cheever:

"Good! Now put the candelabrum down on it."

In a moment, as Cheever proceeded lumberingly on his errand, the brilliant cross-fire of lights dropped away in the studio, only a few smoldering wicks winking on the walls, while the high ceiling seemed to recede as it came under the sole dominion of the three candles bracketed in silver at the head of the bare mahogany table.

"Now listen!" said Mrs. Kildair, and her

voice was cold and abrupt. "My ring has just been stolen!"

She said it suddenly, hurling the news at them, and waiting ferret-like for some indication in the chorus that broke out.

The hand that Beecher still grasped shot out from him as though it had been stung. For the first time, Slade, forgetting Majendie, wheeled brusquely and concentrated his glance on Mrs. Kildair, who listened unmoved to the storm of exclamations:

"Stolen!"

"Oh, my dear Mrs. Kildair, not that!"

"Stolen — by Jove!"

"Rita dear!"

"What! Stolen — here — to-night?"

"The ring has been taken in the last twenty minutes," continued Mrs. Kildair, in the same determined, chiseled accents. "I am not going to mince words. The ring has been taken, and one of you here is the thief. This is exactly the situation."

For a moment nothing was heard but an indescribable gasp, while each, turning by an uncontrollable impulse, searched the face of his neighbors. Suddenly Slade's deep bass broke out:

"Stolen, Mrs. Kildair?"

"Stolen," she replied quietly, meeting his inquisitorial glance.

"Have you searched very carefully?" said Majendie. "Mistakes are easily made. It may have slipped to the floor. Are you certain that it has been taken?"

"Exactly. There is not the slightest doubt," said Mrs. Kildair, conscious of the almost admiring suspicion in Slade's glance. "Three of you were in my bedroom when I took off my rings, placed a hatpin through them, and fastened them to the pin-cushion. Am I correct, Mr. Garraboy?" she added abruptly.

"Perfectly so," said the broker, staring ahead with a sudden consciousness of his dilemma. He added punctiliously; "I was there."

"With the exception of Mr. Slade, each of you has passed through my bedroom a dozen times. The ring is gone, and one of you has taken it."

Mrs. Cheever gave a little scream and reached heavily for a glass of water. Mrs. Bloodgood said something inarticulate, covering her heart with her hand in the muffled outburst of masculine exclamation:

"The devil you say!"

"Incredible!"

"I saw it."

"By Jove! A nasty mess."

Only Maud Lille's calm voice could be heard saying:

"Quite true. I was in the room when you took them off. The ruby was on top."

Mrs. Cheever sought to add her testimony, but was incapable of speech. In her agitation she spilled half of the glass of water as she put it down from her lips.

"Was the ring valuable?" said Slade carefully, with a quiet enjoyment.

Their eyes met a moment — a look incomprehensible to the others.

"It was worth over fifteen thousand dollars," Mrs. Kildair answered, in the buzz of astonishment.

"And what are you going to do about it?"

"I have not minced words," she said, turning her eyes to Maud Lille and back to Garraboy. "There is a thief, and that thief is here in this room. Now, I am not going to stand on ceremony. I am going to have that ring back in one way or another — now. Listen to me carefully. I intend to have that ring back, and, until I do, not a soul shall leave this room."

"A search?" said Slade quietly.

"No," she said instantly, tapping on the table with her nervous knuckles. "I don't care to know the thief — all I want is the ring. And this is the way I am going to get it." She stopped for another quick, searching glance, and continued with cold control:

"I am going to make it possible for whoever took it to restore it to me without possibility of detection. The doors are locked and will stay locked. I am going to put out the lights, and I am going to count one hundred — slowly. You will be in absolute darkness; no one will know or see what is done, and I give my word that I will count the full hundred. There will be no surprise, no turning up of lights. But if, at the end of that time, the ring is not placed here on this table, I shall telephone for detectives and have every one in this room searched. Am I clear?"

The transfer of the candelabrum to the further table had left those of the diners who had remained by the dinner-table in half obscurity. Instantly there was a shifting and a dragging of chairs, a confused jumble of questions and explanations.

Nan Charters for the second time seized the arm of Teddy Beecher. She murmured something which he did not hear. He glanced at her face, and for a moment an incredible suspicion crossed his mind. But the next, as he glanced down the table at the totally unnerved attitude of Mrs. Cheever and Mrs. Bloodgood, he understood better the agitation of his companion.

"Do you suspect any one?" he whispered, by an impulse that seemed to spring into his mind.

The young actress turned to him with almost an expression of terror in her eyes, which at the same time implored him to be silent.

"She knows something," he thought, with a somber feeling. His own face was flushed. He felt that to all he must appear guilty. "Every one feels the same," he thought, looking again at his companion, who was gazing with almost frightened intensity straight ahead of her. He followed her glance, and saw that the object of her gaze was none other than Mrs. Enos Bloodgood, who still held her hand pressed over her breast, her lips parted as though suffocating with emotion. But, before he had time even to consider the bearing of this discovery, Mrs. Kildair's voice, firm and unrelenting, cut short the confusion.

"Every one come to this table, please. Take your places here," she said, and to emphasize the command she rapped sharply for order.

In the bustle that took place, Beecher was separated from Miss Charters, and when he found himself at the table she was opposite him, her eyes on the table.

"Can you make a little room?" he heard Maud Lille's low voice say, and, drawing away from Cheever, who was on his right, he allowed the journalist to take her place beside him.

Majendie was on the left of Mrs. Kildair, Slade next to him, sweeping the table slowly with his direct, lowering glance, his lips slightly pursed. Bloodgood, his hands sunk in his pockets, stared bullishly ahead, while between Cheever and his wife there passed a covert, terrible glance of interrogation. Garraboy, with his hands locked over his chin, arms folded, looked straight ahead fixedly at his hostess.

Mrs. Kildair, having assured herself that all was arranged as she desired, blew out two of the three candles, which suddenly caused the eyes on the dim faces to stand out in startled relief.

"I shall count one hundred — no more, no less," she said quietly. "Either the ring is returned or every one in this room is to be searched. Remember."

She motioned to Slade, who, leaning over, blew out the remaining candle, while a little hysterical cry was heard from Mrs. Cheever.

The wick shone a moment with a hot, glowing spire, and then everything was black. Mrs. Kildair began to count.

"One — two — three — four — five — six — seven — eight — nine — ten ——"

She gave each number with the inexorable regularity of a clock's reiterated note.

"Eleven — twelve — thirteen — fourteen — fifteen — sixteen — seventeen ——"

In the room every sound was distinct — the rustle of a shifting dress, the grinding of a shoe, the deep, slightly asthmatic breathing of a man.

"Twenty-one — twenty-two — twenty-three — twenty-four — twenty-five — twenty-six ——"

The counting went on, without the slightest variation, with a methodic, rasping reiteration that began to produce almost a hypnotic effect on the imaginations held in suspense.

"Thirty — thirty-one — thirty-two — thirty-three ——"

A slight rasping breath was heard, and then a man nervously clearing his throat.

"Thirty-nine — forty — forty-one — forty-two ——"

Still nothing had happened. No other sound had broken in on the strained attention of every ear. Yet the voice that counted did not vary in the slightest measure; only the sound became less human, more metallic.

"Forty-seven — forty-eight — forty-nine — fifty — fifty-one — fifty-two ——"

A woman had sighed — Mrs. Bloodgood next to him — the sigh of a woman yielding up consciousness to pain.

"Fifty-four — fifty-five — fifty-six — fifty-seven — fifty-eight — fifty-nine — sixty — sixty-one ——"

All at once, clear, ringing, unmistakable, on the resounding plane of the table was heard a quick metallic note that echoed and reëchoed in the empty blackness.

"The ring!"

It was Maud Lille's deep voice that had cried out. Beecher suddenly against his shoulder felt the weight of Mrs. Bloodgood's swaying body. The voice that counted hesitated a moment, but only a moment.

"Sixty-two — sixty-three——"

Several voices began to protest:

"No, no!"

"Light the candles!"

"It's too much!"

"Don't go on!"

"Seventy-five — seventy-six — seventy-seven — seventy-eight — seventy-nine ——"

The sound dominated the protest. Some one began to laugh, a hysterical, feverish laughter that chilled Beecher to the bones. He put out his hand and steadied the body of the woman next to him.

"Eighty-five — eighty-six ——"

"Hurry, oh, hurry — please hurry!" cried the voice of Nan Charters, and some one else cried:

"Enough — this is terrible!"

"Ninety-five — ninety-six — ninety-seven — ninety-eight — ninety-nine, and one hundred."

At once a match sputtered in the hands of Slade. There was a cry from every one, and the table shivered with the weight of those who craned forward. Then a second cry of amazement and horror. The table was absolutely bare. The ring a second time had been taken.

TO BE CONTINUED

DETECTIVE BURNS' GREAT CASES

The Mystery of the Double Eagles

BY

ARTHUR B. REEVE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILLIAM OBERHARDT

I

"THIRTY thousand doliar shortage discovered at the mint. Require ablest and best talent in the government service."

Never had the Secretary of the Treasury received a more alarming message than was flashed to him some ten years ago from the Director of the Mint himself.

Consider for a moment what this simple telegram meant, coming from the Director at a time when he happened to be visiting one of the leading branch mints of the country.

From the massive granite and sandstone exterior of the great United States treasure-house to the minutest electrical device, the mint bespoke national security and national strength. It was supposed to represent the utmost progress in protective systems and mechanisms of the time — safety raised to the *n*th power.

The very external aspect of the mint seemed to say to the world that such a thing as theft was impossible. Huge doors proclaimed by their very ponderosity that it was their sole duty to guard the nation's treasure. Guards were stationed at every remotely vulnerable point. Apparently, nothing that human ingenuity could devise was lacking.

From the moment the bullion entered on the various processes until it returned again to the outside world as gold coin, all sorts of delicate tests, checks, and balances had been devised to protect the government. No bank is so exact, no record is kept so clean, as in the United States money mills. Every ounce of metal, every penny of coin, must be accounted for invariably before the cashier of the mint can call his day's work done.

Consider this, also. Far from the street lay the great vaults where the mass of money was guarded with vigilance surpassing that be-

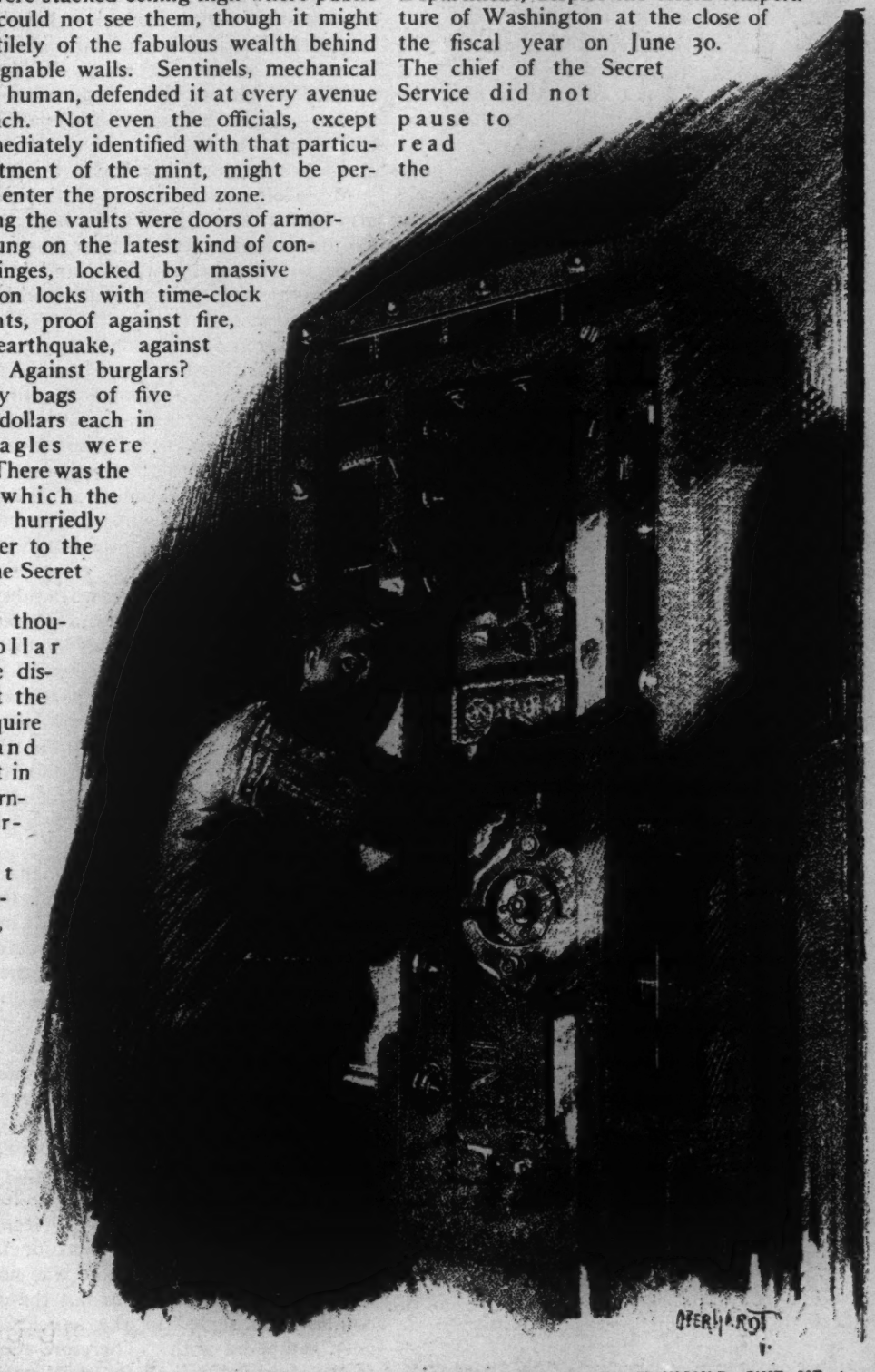
NOTE: Names, dates, and places are, for obvious reasons, either changed, concealed, or omitted in this amazing revelation of how William J. Burns thwarted one of the cleverest crooks who ever tried to beat the government at its own game of guarding the millions of dollars in one of the large branch mints.

stowed on almost any other house of treasure. In this secret realm no visitor could enter. Millions were stacked ceiling-high where public curiosity could not see them, though it might dream futilely of the fabulous wealth behind the impregnable walls. Sentinels, mechanical as well as human, defended it at every avenue of approach. Not even the officials, except those immediately identified with that particular department of the mint, might be permitted to enter the proscribed zone.

Guarding the vaults were doors of armor-plate, swung on the latest kind of concealed hinges, locked by massive combination locks with time-clock attachments, proof against fire, against earthquake, against burglars. Against burglars? Six heavy bags of five thousand dollars each in double eagles were missing! There was the telegram, which the Secretary hurriedly turned over to the chief of the Secret Service:

"Thirty thousand dollar shortage discovered at the mint. Require ablest and best talent in the government service."

If that could happen once, what would prevent its happening again? If it could happen with thirty thousand, why not with three hundred thousand — with three million? The message was enough to send shivers up the spine of the Treasury Department, despite the torrid temperature of Washington at the close of the fiscal year on June 30. The chief of the Secret Service did not pause to read the



"'THE WATCHMAN WOULD HAVE LEFT ON HIS ROUNDS. THAT WOULD GIVE ME A CHANCE TO OPEN THE VAULT'"

message twice. There was just one man in the service at the time to whom all such difficult and knotty cases were turned over. He handed the telegram to Burns.

As he was whirled across the country the great detective spent the hours gazing at scenery that he did not see and turning the matter over in his mind. This much he knew. Some one trusted and high in the government employ itself had gone wrong. Fifteen hundred double eagles had been taken by some one on the inside. A black stain on the amazingly clean record of the mint in handling billions upon billions of dollars must be erased. Even before he arrived on the scene, Burns knew that this must prove a historic case.

II

Burns began first what he calls his "secret investigation." When he arrived on the scene, he did not let a soul know who he was or why he was there until he had looked the ground over. He began by placing everybody who was in a position to know anything about the crime under suspicion, and then, by what is known as the "process of elimination," arriving at the possible suspects. He looked over the mint itself where the loss had occurred, investigated the methods of conducting business throughout the day, absorbed everything that might or might not prove evidential. After going over the mint thoroughly, he watched carefully for days how business was transacted, the number of clerks around, all sorts of things, until he might almost have been learning to run the mint himself.

Let us say, for the purposes of this story, that the superintendent of the mint was Mr. Atchison — "Mr. A." Atchison enjoyed the distinction, at the time, of being the ablest man who had ever held the position anywhere in the country. He was a large, fine-looking man, middle-aged, with a clear eye, a hearty voice, and a grip of the hand that left you with no doubt as to the power of the man behind it. He was known as a man of the greatest integrity and honor, extremely careful in the conduct of the affairs of the mint, a man who had shown great interest and intelligence in keeping up the good record of efficiency which had been set for the institution under him.

The chief clerk, "Mr. B.,"— or let us call him Mr. Braden,— was also a man of high character and standing in the community. He had come to the mint on the recommendation of some of the most influential men in that section of the country, had risen from the position of cashier until now he was assistant superintendent. He was a tall, rather spare, engaging chap, who by the sheer force of an attractive personality had won for himself membership in some exclusive clubs of the city, though he lived with his family in the suburbs. There was something about Braden of that solidity which one sees in the successful commuter — grave, but not aloof, capable, methodical, a man who had raised himself in the world and felt a pardonable pride in his position.

Mr. Colton,— or "Mr. C.,"— the cashier, also bore a reputation for the highest integrity. Colton was one of those men whom, if he had come to the ordinary man and had asked a little favor, the ordinary man would have been proud to accommodate. He would have felt a little flattered merely by having been asked. Colton was still young, ambitious, and eager to get ahead, and his position as a church member and a leading citizen in the section of the city where he lived stamped him as a "comer." He was respected highly by those who knew him, and his appointment as cashier a year before had been only what they expected.

In fact, all three, Atchison, Braden, and Colton, as well as the other employees, seemed impeccable. Many of the two hundred-odd employees had records of long and faithful service in this mint, some of them as high as forty or forty-five years. Men who had worked there from ten to thirty years were common among them.

And yet, when the Director of the Mint from Washington had been present for the government in its usual settlement with the various mints in the country, he had found that this particular branch mint showed a shortage of thirty thousand dollars.

More than that, investigation had disclosed the fact that the shortage was in the vault of the cashier. The Director had made absolutely sure that the cashier was actually short before he had wired the facts to the Secretary of the Treasury; there was no question about it. In this mint there were several large vaults, belonging to the assayer, the receiver, the coiner, the melter and refiner, and the cashier. It was Colton's vault alone that had been found to be short.

There was a time-lock on the vault, too, and no person had the combination except Colton. The only copy of it was in a sealed envelop, and that was in the custody of Atchison, to be used only in case of accident or the sudden death of the cashier. There was no evidence, as yet, to show whether or not the copy of the combination sealed in the envelop had ever been tampered with. Therefore the discovery of the shortage was all the more sensational.

Burns went over the life and habits of Colton,

"'THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF $30,000 HERE,' SAID THE SUPERINTENDENT"

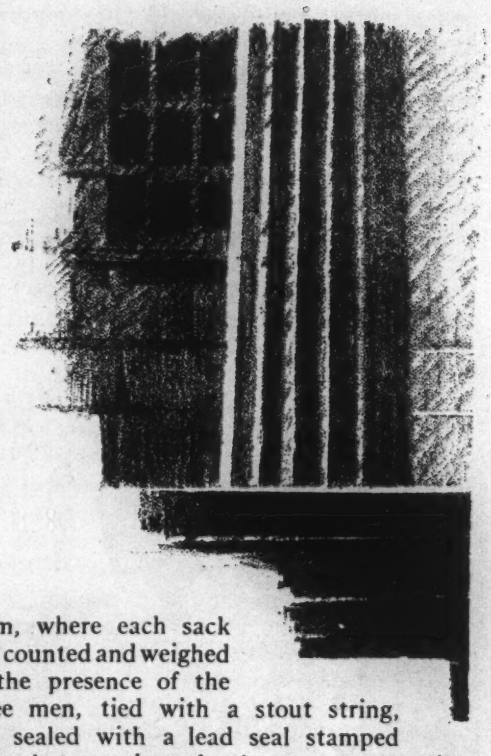
the cashier, with a microscope. Apparently he was a man of the best record and connections, just the sort one would pick out instinctively as the man through whose hands all the money that was to be paid in or out should go. All this time Colton betrayed not the slightest outward symptom of uneasiness, although he knew that the shortage had been found, and must have suspected that he was being watched. What a surprise it would have been to the community to know that everything in Colton's vault down at the mint was not correct!

There was another peculiar coincidence in the situation, too. For instance, on the day the shortage was discovered, it had happened, as it so often happens in such cases, that Colton had been ill, very suddenly taken with a bad case of tonsillitis. Thus it had been that the cashier was not present when the shortage was discovered. But the superintendent and the chief clerk had been there.

Many things about the mint interested Burns. For example, the system of accounts was somewhat intricate, in order to secure absolute accuracy in handling such large sums of money. Just to illustrate with what minuteness business was done, there were reports in weight in standard ounces of metal, its cost value and the nominal value of the coin made from it, the number of ounces being multiplied by the value of one ounce of metal at the time, worked out to the millionth of a cent. That was in order to arrive at the "seigniorage," the profit the government makes in coining metals.

All accounts of various departments ultimately went through one office, where they were compiled and sent to Washington daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annually, according to the nature of the reports. Finally, at the close of the fiscal year two officers were detailed by the Bureau of the Mint to examine the accounts, weigh the bullion, count the coin in hand, and report the results of this examination to the Bureau in Washington. Everything was done with scrupulous exactness and precision.

There was nothing of this mass of detail that escaped Burns in his hunt for the criminal who set these checks and balances in defiance. He noted everything, such as the "delivery" every morning, as it is called, when the coiner delivers to the superintendent the coin that has been made the day before in his department, which is then placed in the vault in the cashier's office. Representatives of the assay department, of the superintendent and of the coiner, had to be present at the "delivery." The coin had to be receipted for to the coiner, and brought in sacks on trucks to the cashier's



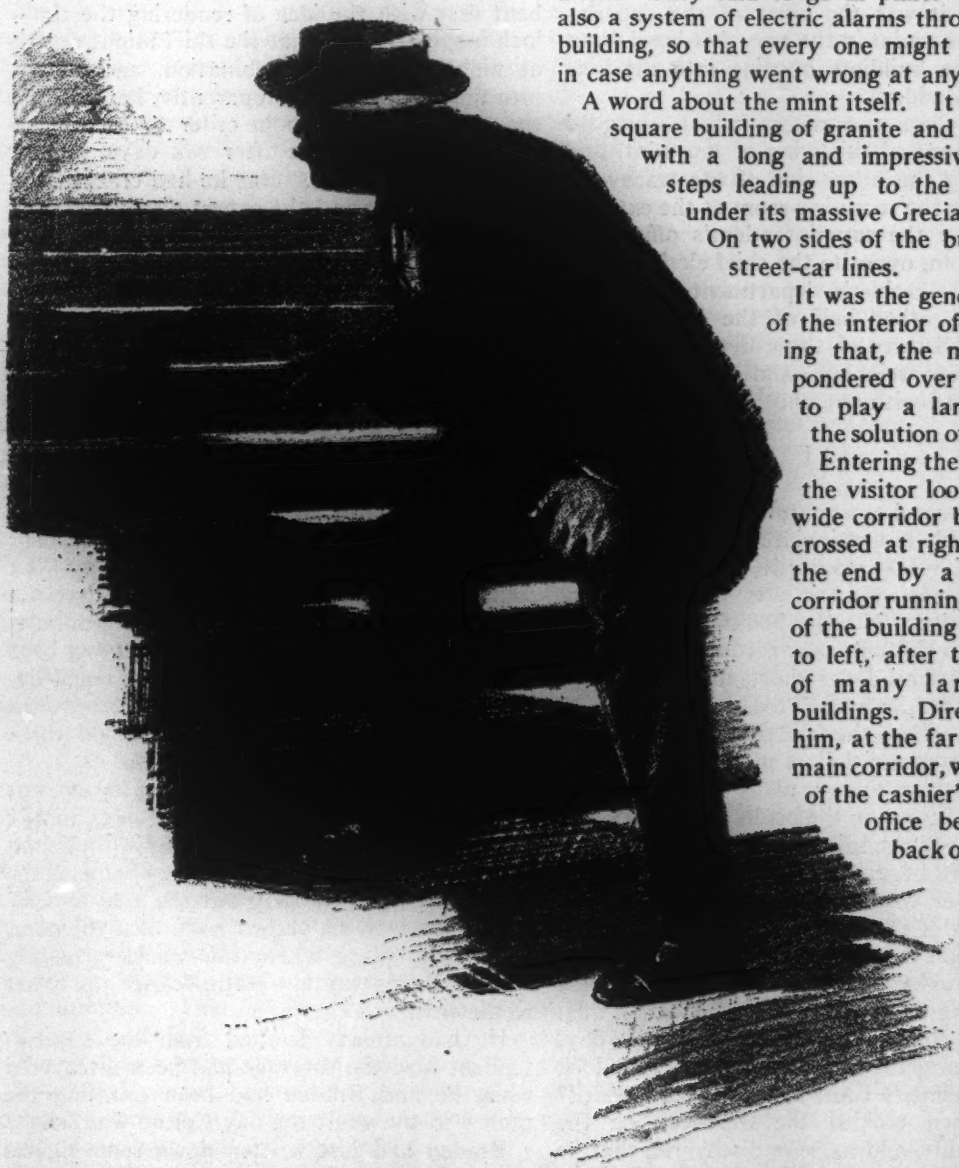
room, where each sack was counted and weighed in the presence of the three men, tied with a stout string, and sealed with a lead seal stamped with the superintendent's name, secured so that if the sack was tampered with it could be seen.

A glance at the conduct of a mint is a romantic revelation of a fairy world where gold and silver are the stock in trade, as in other more sordid businesses it is mere iron pig or bolts of cloth. For instance, a citizen with gold to sell, a miner perhaps, would go to the receiving-room. There he would find a long counter on which was a scoop into which he would dump his dust, nuggets, or old gold. Back of this counter he could see desks and tables, interspersed perhaps with trucks actually loaded with real gold bars, a fortune casually wheeled about like a sack of oats.

It is not a part of this particular story, though it is a romance in itself, how the gold is carefully weighed in the weighing-room next to the receiving-room, the various processes through the laboratory of the assay department in the basement, the assay furnaces, the delicate scales and weights of the adjusters, the melting and refining department, the settling and silver reduction tanks, the ingot melting-room, the rolling-room with its long, gleaming strips of rolled gold, the annealing-furnaces, the coiner's department with its coin-presses, the milling, and reeding-machines, the weigh-room with its ingenious counting-boards — a long process, ending with the cashier's vault hiding its mystery of the missing double eagles. Mystery it

was, too; for so carefully were all these processes carried out that, with a wastage allowed by law of one thousandth to the melter and only half that to the coiner, the infinitesimally small amount of only six or seven per cent of even this legal wastage occurred.

But it was in none of these departments that Burns knew he must look for the thief. Altogether, there were as many as seventeen watchmen, of whom twelve worked at night, eight on the inside and four on the outside. No clue to the mystery was coming from them,— at least at the start,— and Burns still was going alone and single-handed in his quiet study of the situation. Each watchman, he observed, had a certain station on the different floors and a specific round to make each half hour, ringing a bell to notify the man at the door that he had attended to his duty. Failure to ring the bell caused investigation. In certain rooms, such as the refinery, no watchman ever might go alone. They had to go in pairs. There was also a system of electric alarms throughout the building, so that every one might be notified in case anything went wrong at any point.



"'IF I HAD ACCESS TO THIS MINT AT NIGHT,' BURNS ASKED HIMSELF, 'WHAT POSSIBLE CHANCE WOULD I HAVE TO STEAL $30,000?'"

A word about the mint itself. It was a huge square building of granite and sandstone, with a long and impressive flight of steps leading up to the main door under its massive Grecian columns. On two sides of the building ran street-car lines.

It was the general lay-out of the interior of the building that, the more Burns pondered over it, proved to play a large part in the solution of the crime. Entering the front door, the visitor looked down a wide corridor before him, crossed at right angles at the end by a transverse corridor running the width of the building from right to left, after the manner of many large public buildings. Directly before him, at the far end of the main corridor, was the door of the cashier's office, the office being at the back of the building and extending from the center to the right wing, along the far side of the transverse corridor. It was in this right wing, at the back, that the cashier's vault which had been rifled was located.

To the right of the main corridor as one entered, in the front of the building,

and consequently lying opposite the cashier's office along the transverse corridor, was the numismatist's room, where coins and medals were kept in a museum. To the left, as one entered this main corridor, was the office of the chief clerk, Braden, with a door leading into the main corridor, as well as another leading into the transverse corridor. This office extended from the front of the building to the transverse corridor. Next to and communicating with it was the office of the superintendent of the mint in the very left-hand front corner of the building, opening into the long transverse corridor.

Opposite these two offices, which occupied the entire front of this wing of the mint, and ranged along the other side of the transverse corridor, was the receiving-room at the extreme end, opposite the superintendent's office; the weighing-room, opposite the chief clerk's office; and then the cashier's department, extending through the other half of the back of the building. All three of these departments, the cashier's, the weighing, and the receiving, communicated with one another.

III

Burns' first and most natural query had been: Was it possible to manipulate the books? That proved to be easy to settle, in spite of the intricate system. And it was settled quickly in the negative. No, the books were perfect. According to Colton's own accounts, there was a thirty-thousand-dollar shortage!

Even the cashier himself could not conceal, or had not concealed, the fact that there ought to be thirty thousand dollars more in gold pieces in the vault than there actually was. Blazoned in damning figures on the books themselves was the mystery of the missing double eagles.

Here Burns began his clear and clever reasoning. With an instinct that led him unerringly to the heart of the matter, he quickly came to the conclusion that it was absolutely impossible for any one to have taken the money in business hours, during the day. The next question was: If the money had not been taken during the day, how was it possible to manipulate the time-lock after the cashier's vault had once been closed?

Burns then tackled the time-lock on the cashier's vault, and he soon discovered that he was on the right trail. Some one had filed the dog-locking device so that it could be operated by one who knew the combination, hidden in Colton's mind and sealed in the superintendent's envelop. It made no difference whether the time-lock was set or not. It was out of business. When it was apparently set it really did not lock the combination. No one ever discovered it, for no one ever tried to open it out of hours, except the thief.

The time-lock was taken to a jeweler, and later a government expert — one of the best in the country — was summoned from Washington. Burns and the expert found that the thief had bent a little arm in the time-lock in such a way that it did not strike the proper part to lock the tumblers. The arm had been bent first with the idea of rendering the time-lock inoperative, so that the thief might return at night, work the combination, and so get into the vault. Later, apparently, he had bent the arm farther down in order to be able to work the combination after two days, say on Sunday or a holiday. But he had cracked the nickel, as Burns and the expert discovered, had found that filing the dog-locking device was sufficient, and had bent the arm back again.

Next Burns devoted his attention to the vault itself. He found that at this time and for several months it had been congested with money. All the stationary pigeonholes or receptacles for the sealed bags, each compartment holding a bag of gold with five thousand dollars in it,— in one section in fives, in another eagles, and in another double eagles,— were full. Therefore, in order to put more money into the vault, two trucks had been pushed up against the east side of it, entirely out of the way. Of course there was no likelihood of wanting to use the money on the trucks or in the pigeonholes back of them. There were plenty of other bags that could be readily got at for any usual demand. These trucks remained stationary until the final accounting, and, in all, some three million dollars accumulated on them.

In counting over the bags, keeping the amount on the trucks separate from the bags in the pigeonholes, the men who did the work found that the three million was intact. Some of the men who helped to carry out the gold remembered, however, six vacant holes near the floor, behind the place where the trucks generally stood. Burns was now getting closer and closer to the truth.

He had already learned from the superintendent how the shortage had been discovered when he and Braden had been counting the money in the vault the day Colton was sick.

Braden had just written down some figures when Atchison leaned over. "There is a shortage of thirty thousand here," said the superintendent keenly.

"No, I think not," replied Braden, continuing to figure; "or perhaps it is due to the cash drawer; or there may have been a mistake in the count."

"Not a bit of it, Braden," replied Atchison promptly. "That count is right."

Count and recount as they might, there was no straightening of it out. There was the mystery at the start, and that was as far as anybody had got when Burns arrived at this point. The money was gone — that was all there was to it. No one believed that it had been spirited away, but then, no one knew what to believe.

"I satisfied myself thoroughly," says Burns, "that it was not even possible to bring the money out into the cashier's office in the daytime, then hide it until night. Every afternoon, before the doors were closed, the cashier and the chief clerk counted every dollar, and, in the presence of the cashier, every day the O. K. of the chief clerk was placed on the cash."

Burns went out and took a turn or two up and down the street; then stood in the shadow of the high Doric columns, thoughtfully revolving the matter over and over in his mind. For it is his theory, in every important case, to put himself in the place of the thief. Point-blank he asked himself, "If I had access to this mint at night from the time of the chief clerk's O. K., and after the mint is closed, to midnight, what possible chance would I have to steal thirty thousand dollars?"

The more he thought of it, the clearer it became, until finally he put the case hypothetically this way: "In order to do that, it is necessary to have entrée to this mint at night under proper pretext, to have entrée to the cashier's office at night under proper pretext, to be able to carry a valise or suit-case in and out of the mint at night under proper pretext. If I had this entrée I could then go ahead. It would then be necessary to manipulate the time-lock in such a way as to render it inoperative. I should also have to know the combination of the vault.

"If that were all true, then I could come into the cashier's office at 4:30 P. M., when the clerks had all gone. At that minute the watchman on that floor, who is as regular as clockwork, has lighted the lights in the cashier's office and has left on his rounds, not to return for twenty-eight minutes. That would give me a chance to open the vault."

Burns then sauntered in and traced out the hypothetical course. Some one, he continued to reason, came in at half past four, opened the vault, took out one or two sacks,— never more, for they weighed nearly thirty pounds,— and carried them out. Then he hid them in a box-counter in the cashier's office under some empty coin-sacks.

Instead of going out to the main corridor by the natural way, he must have gone on through the weighing-room to the receiving-room. In this way he would be out of sight of the watchman who was always at the main door in the main corridor, looking right down to the cashier's office. In the receiving-room he would then have to climb a counter, and could leave by a door opening into the transverse corridor. Directly across from this door, only ten feet away, was the office of the superintendent. This office had a door opening into the office of the chief clerk. If the gold were hidden, it might be done up in some sort of package and carried out that night or the following day. Probably the thief returned at, say, eleven o'clock at night, when there was a shift of watchmen. He must come in, go to his office on a plausible pretext, get the two sacks hidden in the cashier's office, and in that fashion make his get-away.

This was clear and clever reasoning, and it told Burns much. But it did not catch any criminals — because, as you see, the route taken by the thief involved the offices of Atchison, Braden, and Colton, all three. Burns had his suspicions, and the reader probably has his. At any rate, Burns' were right. It was a question of building up the evidence.

IV

Burns was now ready to come out of cover and begin his "open investigation." Up to this time he had been lying low, but he had now reached a point where certain phases of the case could be inquired into only by his coming out. For instance, he had not yet even been introduced to Braden, though he had been watching everybody and everything in and about the mint.

"I have never met you, Mr. Burns," said Braden one day soon afterward, "but I think I ought to introduce myself. I'm glad to know that you've been detailed on this case, for I've heard and read a great deal about you."

Burns shook hands, and as he did so he noted Braden's clear, steady gaze into his own eyes. And that is something for any man to do; for, if there is one thing above the many that impress you about Burns, it is those boring steel points of eyes of his which cut into your very soul like a bit and seem to strike home at what is lying hidden there.

"I'm satisfied," Braden added, "that you'll find the thief, and if there's anything I can do to aid you, command me."

"Thank you, Braden," returned Burns; "I'll be glad to call on you later."

It is always easier to pick criminals and pile up evidence in predigested detective stories than it is in real life. Burns had made up his mind

long before he came out into the open, but there were still some small matters that he did not quite fully see. So it wasn't long before he decided to take advantage of the chief clerk's considerate offer.

"You're the best posted man in this mint on the conduct of the business and things in general," wheedled Burns, to start with. "Now, Braden, as man to man, give me the benefit for a moment of your intimate knowledge. Tell me, how do you yourself think it in reason possible for any person to steal that money? Of course, there must be some person whom you suspect. Who is it?"

For the first time Braden was reluctant to speak. It was quite obvious to Burns that he had his suspicions, and also his reluctance was quite as obvious.

"Yes," he parried; "but you know yourself, Mr. Burns, that it is a serious thing for one in my position to condemn a man on suspicion, and, and — well, I should hate to do it."

"But you must do it," urged Burns, with a becoming show of warmth; "it is your duty."

Braden still hesitated, but it was evident that a name was all but bursting from his lips. Burns pressed him. Finally, with reluctance, he whispered the name of the cashier.

"Yes — Colton," mused Burns. "There was nobody in a position to do it except the cashier. But then, Braden, can't you see the utter futility of any one like Colton expecting to be able to get away with it? What puzzles me is how he could manage it."

"Well, I've figured out several ways. For instance, there are a number of large depositors who do a good deal of business with the mint. One concern alone does from $50,000 to $200,000 a year. There might be some mix-up there."

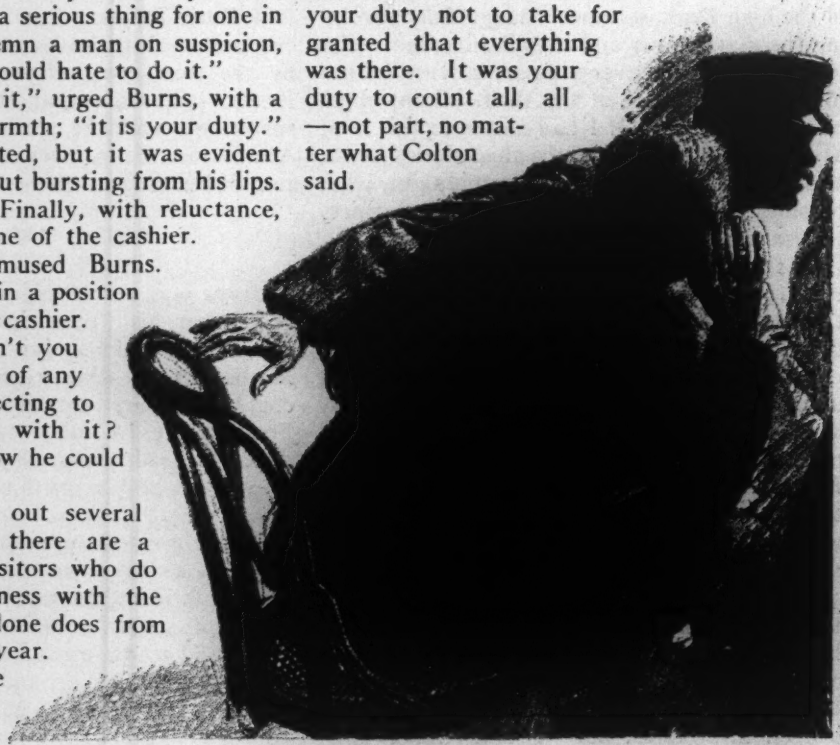
After going over the drafts and the action that had to be taken on them by the chief clerk himself, as well as each step in the delivery of the money, Burns readily convinced Braden how impossible it was for Colton to do anything in that way.

"Well, then, how about this?" suggested Braden, his reluctance all gone now. "The cashier, when he is filling a truck in the vault with his assistant,— you know, he is never alone,— could surreptitiously miscount the sacks when the other fellow was off guard, and place a couple of extra bags on the truck. Then, as it was going through the office, he might secretly shove off the sacks, hide them, and later get off with them."

"But there are too many clerks around," objected Burns. "No; you'll have to do better than that."

"Well, how about this?" pursued Braden, thoroughly warmed up to the detective job. "Why couldn't he have the other man stand in with him,— put on, say, two extra sacks,— and then later the two of them divide up?"

Burns picked that to pieces, too, until even Braden had to admit the folly of Colton's dreaming of such a thing. Then he began a little quizzing on his own account. "Braden," he asked casually, "while you were counting the cash with Colton every day, why did you fail to look behind the trucks in the vaults? It was your duty not to take for granted that everything was there. It was your duty to count all, all — not part, no matter what Colton said.



"'WHAT'S THAT NOISE I HEAR IN THE CASHIER'S ROOM?' HE

It was your business to see whether the pigeonholes behind the trucks were filled or not. Now why didn't you discover the shortage before?"

The chief clerk shrugged his shoulders. "I took it for granted that they were all there," he answered weakly.

Right here Burns stuck a pin. The failure to look back of the trucks each day showed conclusively one of two things: either some one was outrageously derelict, or he purposely avoided finding the abstraction of the bags.

"Why," continued Burns, "what was the use of counting at all, if you overlooked half a million dollars or so hidden by the two trucks?"

"I didn't think it was necessary to look behind there," reiterated Braden more strongly. "I trusted Colton, and — oh, say, here's another possibility that has occurred to me. Why couldn't he have taken out two sacks, put the money on the cash-table in the vault, and then carried in something — anything, potatoes maybe — to fill up the empty sack before he put it back?"

ASKED. 'DON'T KNOW,' SAID THE OTHER. 'KEEP STILL!'"

"Impossible," ejaculated Burns skeptically. "How could he seal it?"

"Well," exclaimed Braden, somewhat nettled, "if you explode all my theories, I must confess I have no others to offer. I can't see how else he could have done it. What's your own theory?"

Burns briefly outlined the case he had worked out.

"Impossible," interrupted Braden. "Why, the time-lock was on, Mr. Burns. He couldn't come back and open it. No; there are no other theories if you reject those I ——"

"Think it over," cut in Burns, turning on his heel.

Burns stuck to his theory, too. He went to the men who, covering the period from the previous settlement to the discovery of the shortage, had been on watch. He asked them if they had ever seen any one there after the mint was closed. Some said they never had; others said they had on a few occasions. But all said that whomever they saw never carried a package, a valise, or a suit-case in or out after the mint was closed.

If that were true, then the whole theory that Burns was working up fell to the ground. The men went further and assured him that every package had to be shown to the man at the door. That also exploded the theory. But Burns did not believe it was true.

He took the men one at a time, and finally found that there was really only one whom he knew must have been the man on duty when the package or grip, whatever it was, was carried in and out. He took this man aside and told him directly, bringing his cutting eyes into play again, that he suspected him of being part of the conspiracy to loot the mint. That was startling news to the doorman, and he did some quick thinking as well as vigorous asserting of his innocence. Burns told him that he had stated positively that no one had ever gone in or out with a grip, whereas Burns knew better — that some one had.

The watchman looked at him blankly; then a new light seemed to come over his face. There was no fake about it. He had forgotten, but now he actually remembered that an officer of the mint several months before had brought a suit-case one night after seven o'clock, and, with his office door open, had disrobed almost in the presence of the watchman, put on a dress suit, and had gone out to attend a reception. About eleven o'clock he had returned, taken off the suit, put it back in the suit-case, and taken it away with him. This happened on several occasions. But he had taken nothing out except the suit. The man was sure of that. So was Burns, up to a point.

This, then, was an important clue. The man had taken nothing at all until, say, the last few times. It was all cleverly done to "educate" the watchman to see him going in and out with a suit-case at night.

V

The trail was now hot. One day Burns went to the cashier himself. "Colton," he demanded, without any warning, "who changed that lock on the vault?"

"Why," replied Colton thoughtfully, "when I became cashier about a year ago the combination had to be changed. It must have been done by a locksmith."

At once Burns began to trace this assertion down through the labyrinth of fact. It didn't take him long to find that the accounts showed no charge whatever for the services of a locksmith.

Burns confronted the cashier with this fact from his own records. Then Colton said he had made a mistake. He now recalled that when he had assumed his duties, he had asked the chief clerk, whom he succeeded as cashier, what to do about the combination.

"Oh," said Braden, "there isn't any need of getting a locksmith; I'll help you change it."

Together the cashier and the chief clerk had set the combination. Burns made the cashier show him exactly how he claimed it was done.

It seemed that there were four numbers in the combination, the first and last being fixtures, so that only two had to be set by Colton himself. According to Colton, Braden had stood in a certain position while he had tried to fix the second number after the first fixture. As often as he tried, he failed. Something was wrong with the tumblers. At last Braden had said he thought he saw what was wrong.

"Upset it, Colton," he had ordered, "and begin all over again. I'll tell you when the tumblers catch. First the fixture. There. Now try again. Four turns to the right, remember, and set it wherever it happens to be. There — slowly — no — whoa! — a little more, there. The tumblers catch all right. Set that number down, whatever it is. Now twice the other way — and set it at just whatever it is when the tumblers catch — there."

Burns continued to ponder the matter. Suddenly the truth flashed on him. There were only two numbers to be set, since the first and last were fixtures. In some way, Braden had made scratches on the back of the lock which would indicate to one who had made them where the combination was being set by some one else on the other side. One scratch was at twelve, the other at ten. Twelve and ten were the second and third numbers in Colton's combination. From the position which Colton said Braden had assumed, Burns saw that Braden could manipulate the tumblers so that whatever number Colton set the combination at would prove a failure. Then, after Colton had tried again and again and failed, Braden had worked the scheme of telling him that the tumblers caught at the twelve and then at the ten. They caught because Braden did not manipulate them at those points. Braden had forced a card on Colton!

"Now," reasoned Burns, "that filing of the dog-locking device could all have been done a year ago, when Braden himself was cashier. Therefore Colton's story is quite plausible, and he might not have noticed it, since he would have no occasion, if he were honest, to discover that the time-lock was inoperative after he thought he set it."

More than that, it was found that Braden had often been found, when he was cashier, working over the lock, which he always said was out of order.

Piecing his case together bit by bit like a mosaic, Burns next investigated to determine who had arranged that the watchman should be so occupied that his place was vacant for twenty-eight minutes in the afternoon when he started on his rounds to light the gas. The superintendent told him that Braden had said that by a rearrangement they could do with one less watchman. The scheme seemed so well worked out that Atchison had said it was all right.

The mystery was gradually clearing itself up. Braden had first filed the dog-locking device, then he had worked Colton for the combination. The next step was to "educate" the watchman to see him go in and out at night with a suit-case. There was still no chance to get away with anything unless the vault was congested. Braden had accomplished this as cleverly as

he had the shifting of the watchman. "Mr. Atchison," he had said, "of what use is it to unseal and seal the other vaults every time we have a little gold to put in or take out? Now, if we take two trucks and put the extra money on them we shall no longer have to break the seal of another vault, but we can put the trucks right into the cashier's vault."

Thus the complete case finally unraveled itself. Step by step, Braden had been working toward a robbery since he himself had been cashier; step by step he had been weaving a web about Colton which should involve him. It was a diabolically clever scheme. It squared with the facts so far. Would it square with new facts?

Patiently Burns set about ferreting out new facts. He questioned every man who might by any possibility have seen anything. From start to finish, he found that he had erected an iron-bound, rock-foundationed case. Colton was innocent.

One night, several months before, four watchmen just going on duty happened to be sitting in the main corridor, with the regular man at his accustomed position at the door. One of them recalled that another was reading from the newspaper an account of the St. Patrick's Day celebration.

"What's that noise I hear in the cashier's room?" he asked.

"It's the chief clerk," replied one of the others.

A moment or two later he thought he heard a noise in the weighing-room.

"What's that?" he asked quickly again.

"Don't know," replied a third. "Keep still. I want to hear about the parade. Go on."

The man who was reading resumed. Just then, from his place near the corner of the main corridor and the transverse corridor, where he was sitting with his chair tilted back against the wall, the first watchman who had heard the noises caught a fleeting, diagonal glimpse down the transverse corridor, as of some one crossing it.

"AT THE FERRY A WATCHMAN, GOING HOME, NOTICED HIM CARRYING A SUIT-CASE WRAPPED ABOUT WITH A NEWSPAPER AS IF TO HIDE SOMETHING BULGING"

A few minutes later Braden came out of his office with a suit-case. He was white as a ghost. He had had a big scare thrown into him by the presence of five watchmen. The man on the tilted chair thought the man at the door

would stop him. But he didn't; instead he merely nodded. He had been "educated."

Another link in the chain Burns was laboriously forging. Out on the big stone steps, that night, Braden had chanced upon one of the outside watchmen. The man had hurried up to help him with his suit-case. "No, no, no," insisted Braden. The man was equally insistent. But Braden won, and jumped on a street-car going to the ferry.

More than that, on the street-car he had had a dispute with the conductor, who wanted to shift the suit-case out of the aisle. The conductor, having once before had words with him, took out a note-book secretly and jotted down in it the date and time with the words, "That crank from the mint," in case the "crank" should lodge a complaint with the company.

At the ferry another watchman, going home, noticed him carrying a suit-case wrapped about with a newspaper as if to hide something bulging. Even the conductor on the other side of the ferry remembered Braden's taking a car home.

Even more than that, it was found that, a couple of weeks before the annual counting of the money, Braden had taken his family several hundred miles on a visit, while he had gone by another route, quite evidently for the purpose of hiding the money.

Here was a chain of evidence whose every link clanked ominously as Burns had forged it since that offer of assistance. You recall that offer of Braden's? "It is my theory," says Burns, "that every criminal leaves a track. This fellow left deep furrows. Any man who is a student of criminology and human nature could have at once detected that Braden had overshot the mark. He looked too straight. He was too persevering in it. It was so marked. I was satisfied beyond question that he had come to me for a purpose. But he had put his foot in it. Then, again, when I asked him of his suspicions, he acted as if he told the name of the cashier reluctantly. Any person sufficiently versed in the investigation and detection of crime could have seen that he had no compunction of conscience whatever. He promptly named the cashier as soon as it was decent to do so, and I apparently acquiesced."

The case was complete. Burns was ready to act.

One day, when he knew Braden was at his club, he called.

"Tell him I can't come out now," Braden sent out.

"Go back and tell Mr. Braden it is very important," Burns ordered the boy.

"He says he is sorry," reported the boy, "but he is in conference."

Burns entered. There was Braden sitting, smoking and joking, with a number of prominent men of the city. He jumped up apologetically. "Beg pardon, Mr. Burns," he said, "but I didn't understand it was you."

"Well, Braden," whispered Burns, drawing him aside, "I've got the thief."

"You have? Good! Let me congratulate you, old man. Never doubted you'd do it. When did you get him?"

"Just now."

"Indeed? Who is he?"

"You."

VI

This is the point where a short-story detective quits with the capture of the real criminal and the vindication of the innocent suspected man. But Burns was just beginning.

"Say, you're joking," protested Braden coolly.

"Not much," reiterated Burns sharply.

"You saw those men in there?" hissed Braden, changing his tactics. "They are some of the most powerful fellows in the city. They can make and unmake people. I can make you lose your job, Burns."

"All right; go ahead, Braden," persisted Burns doggedly. "But you're going with me first."

"You're making a big mistake."

"I'll take a chance on that, but I'll take you, too."

Then, for two days and two nights, there was a battle of wits in Burns' room in the hotel, where he took Braden a virtual prisoner.

It was a dramatic situation, these two men facing each other, with the heart of a great city pulsing about them, and yet alone, each straining at the last ounce of mental power in him. They were "sitting in" a game in which the stakes were Braden's freedom and reputation against justice. Burns knew that, even with a plain open-and-shut case, there were so many slips in a jury trial that only overwhelming evidence would do.

Each eyed the other's every move keenly. Cool and calm and conscious of his power, Burns played his cards. Braden, desperate, deliberate, stood pat. Nor was it an ordinary player who faced Burns. Braden kept his head. He smoked sparingly, drank lightly, and slept almost with one eye literally open, weighing every word of his opponent, watching every action of the detective, and asking himself over and over and over again, "I wonder just how much he *does* know?"

For Burns had been busy flashing a dark lantern on the shady spots in the man's life.

Now, in that hydraulic fashion of his, which has squeezed many a confession out of the most recalcitrant of criminals by the sheer weight of the evidence, he was adding pound after pound of pressure.

He went over the whole case, from the discovery of the shortage, through the various steps down to the now cleared up mystery of the missing double eagles. Braden denied it without the flicker of an eyelash.

Burns drew two cards. He told Braden how he had unearthed the fact that twice before he had been using money that belonged to the government, how he had worked the schemes, how he had covered them up, and how, twice, he had had to get up out of a sick-bed to make good on these "loans" and prevent discovery.

Still Braden did not throw down his cards. Burns finessed. He told him how he had even worked out a scheme to defraud the government, involving checks on the New York subtreasury. He told him how he had imitated the signature of Atchison so perfectly that even Atchison could not have picked a flaw in it. He told him how the scheme had fallen through because Braden could find no one whom he could trust in New York to work the scheme from that end.

Hour after hour, Burns increased the hydraulic pressure of the facts he had dug out. Would Braden be able to resist?

Burns went back into the man's life before he had come to the mint. He told Braden that he had also been a defaulter in one position, that he had hypothecated warehouse receipts in another. He told him how no one had dared prosecute him on the latter two charges.

All this and more he rammed into Braden. But at the end of the forty-eight hours of mental dueling in the hotel room Braden was still standing pat.

Yet there is nothing of the bloodhound about Burns after he has run his man to cover. "I see what's the matter with you," he finally remarked to Braden, never raising his voice. "You're afraid to talk frankly because you think I'll trick you into an admission. Now, I'll agree on my word as a gentleman that anything said between us will not be used against you. We can discuss your case freely."

There could be no doubt that Braden was cornered at last. He was beaten, baffled, betrayed by the facts at every point, weak, nervous, yet still game.

At the end of the second night he asked desperately: "If I give back the thirty thousand, will you let me go free?"

Burns had begun to feel for the man in his power. But there are "some things no fellow can do." "No," he answered; "you'll have to go to court and plead guilty. But I'll get the Department of Justice not to press the two minor cases where you misused government funds, since you afterwards made restitution."

Braden was visibly weakening.

Just then a Secret Service man came in with an evening paper. In spreading headlines it told of the confession of a man who had stolen $228,000 in gold bars from a smelting company. The paper seemed to be roasting the man, not for the theft, but for confessing.

Braden read it attentively.

"That's what they'd say about me," he remarked thoughtfully, as he laid the paper down. "No; do your worst — I won't say another word."

With that, Braden closed up like a clam.

So began a long battle for justice against this clever crook. First he was convicted and sentenced for two years each, on the two minor charges of misusing government funds. But for the theft of the thirty thousand dollars he was tried, and after a bitter fight the jury disagreed. Again he was tried, and again the jury disagreed. Braden's "most powerful fellows in the city" were powerful enough for that.

It was after the second failure to secure a conviction that Burns returned to Washington. James M. Beck, who as federal District Attorney in Philadelphia had prosecuted the hundred-dollar Monroe-head counterfeit case, was Assistant Attorney-General then, and on that day was acting Attorney-General.

"It's too bad we didn't get a conviction," remarked Mr. Beck.

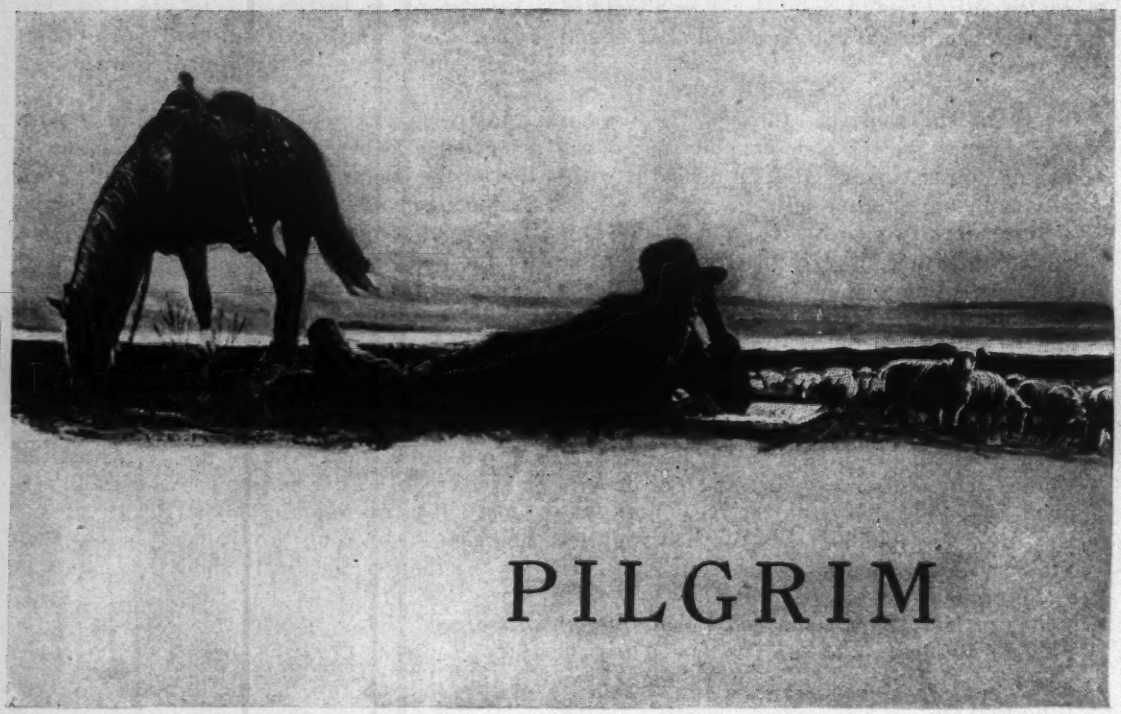
"Well," explained Burns ruefully, "you see, the government is too penurious in conducting its cases to watch the jury. If we had had money enough to keep off the jury-fixers we would have won."

Mr. Beck simply reached for his pen.

"I'll make out an order for the money," he said. "You go back there; we'll hire new lawyers as special district attorneys and keep the jury safe this time."

Then began a final battle royal with the jury-fixers and the corrupt attorneys who were fighting for Braden and the gang with which he was friendly. By the way, his own attorney was afterward sentenced for fourteen years in another matter, and several of the "big fellows who could make and unmake people" have also been unmade themselves.

Braden got nine years altogether. The débâcle of this clever crook was complete. The mint breathed easier. Burns had cleared up and fought to a finish the alarming mystery of the missing double eagles.



PILGRIM

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

ON the dull leaden morning of the ninth of January, he started his sheep out as usual, letting them drift a little in a southeasterly direction. Opaque banks of cloud arched low and gray and heavy to the near horizon. But the pilgrim had so often seen them threaten thus before, and nothing come of it, that he did not hesitate. Nothing, he had now long come to believe, would ever happen in the world again. He had no thought left of either hope or fear.

So, giving the sheep to his dog, and flinging himself down on the bare ground, he opened his "Robinson," and began, as always, to read. Notwithstanding that he knew the book half by heart, he read intently, only throwing out an occasional quick, sweeping glance over the band, which fed quietly below him on a bench. Presently, becoming deeply engrossed in his hero's patient shifts and miseries, he did not look up for some minutes — not till he felt a slash of icy particles of snow in his face.

That effectually roused him. With a bound he was on his feet, watching his wethers moving briskly off before a vigorous, keen wind which had miraculously risen in the northwest. His pony, sniffing and uneasy, stood picketed near by. In another two bounds he was in the saddle, jerking up the picket-pin as he ran. And even then he had seized an instant to wave Alec on far ahead. But by the time he and the collie had got the sheep rounded up, with their reluctant noses pointed toward the corral, the air was a slant of flaying, wind-driven needles of ice and snow.

The boy's twitching face stilled, and a curious, almost gay, smile lighted it. Here at last was something to do; something big and stirring and vital and definite; something to ease the tension of mind and nerve. The blizzard was blowing directly off the corral: he must drive his sheep into the very teeth of it. However, he had obeyed Davy's injunction as to distance literally. There the corral stood, open, hardly more than a quarter of a mile away. Throughout the full length of his ride, the odd smile held the corners of his mouth. This severe trial of his manhood beckoned to him as quite the sweetest thing in life.

Leaping from his pony, he burst into the sheep rampantly; whipping with the detached coil of picket-rope; kicking with the sides of his

BY FRANCIS HILL

P. V. E. IVORY

ankles; giving again and again, with all his lungs, the sharp sheep-cry which, under ordinary circumstances, was a wing to his band's feet. Betweenwhiles he must also, now and then, catch a breath to shout cheerful words of encouragement to Alec. Together they worked, swiftly, frenziedly; and at length the huddled sheep began to yield slightly before them.

By dint of such straining effort, the first hundred yards of the distance was slowly covered. Then the great storm seemed to open out with an eager and sentient fury. The sleety snow came whirling across the bench in vast, solid sheets which choked and blinded like sand. The lad could no longer shout in the rush of it. But, to make up for that, he pushed and plunged and lay about him the livelier with his rope. Alec, too, continued gallantly to bite and worry at the sheep's heels, though his tail drooped low in the murderous blast, and he each moment required more and more of the herder's now mute encouragement. In the rear, the mouse-colored little pony, crouching with rump to the storm, waited till they had got a few feet ahead; till he felt himself left alone. Then, with a shrill whinny of distress, he would trot forward, head down and eyes closed to a mere slit, to resume the old position nearer at hand.

The snow burned like white-hot barbs, the wind swirled by, heavy as a mill-race. In the beginning the pilgrim was not so much troubled by the cold as by the drowning sense of suffocation, though always, of course, the cold had its terrible and inescapable sting. But, even for an instant, he steadfastly refused to turn his head. The collie, finding some protection under the sheep, instinctively kept well in. For man and horse and sheep there was no protection, and a thick icy veneer soon made them one with the whitening earth. The boy's straggled silky beard became incrusted as with steel. But always he strove violently and unheedingly on, with a strength of which he had never before dreamed.

Suddenly he paused for a second, peered ahead into the snow. Look — why, what was this? Had not the band turned inward on itself? Were not these the leaders, stolidly and obstinately beating their way rearward, tails to the storm? What — what? But no, it *couldn't* be! Why, only for the denseness of the storm, the corral where they had folded for seven weary months lay plain in view! They must be able

to *smell* it! And yet, would not the unnatural, stupid brutes battle a little on?

At first he could not be sure, for the head and tail of a sheep were all as one in that portentous blur. But a minute later, when they began to surge against his legs, he knew. Uttering a hoarse, muffled yell of rage, he threw down the unavailing rope, and, picking up single sheep bodily in his arms, cast them as far as he could before him into the storm. In this half-demented blaze of athletic wrath, he had briefly cleared a fair gap before himself in their ranks.

It is said that men who deliberately court death have, at the crucial moment, last Hamlet-like impulses of questioning and alarm. There was nothing of this sort with the lad on the Pigeye summer range. Perhaps he did not even deliberately court death. The incredible straining mechanism of his muscles absorbed him entirely. Overwrought and distempered as his brain was, he must still have been able to reason out that one man could not carry four thousand sheep four hundred yards thus. But such feeble rationalizing power as he now had, he did not attempt to apply. Rather, he seemed finally to have achieved that for which the past months had been one monstrous, unintermittent struggle. His tightened, aching muscles seemed at last to have brought him complete abeyance of mind.

On and on and on he toiled, always with the same frantic, unguided resolution. The cold pinched his flesh like a vise, gnawed his bones like crunching, wolfish teeth. The collie came to him, whining and lifting up its paws. But if he desisted fighting for an instant, he lost ground.

At length he began to lose ground anyway. Combat each inch as desperately as he would, the wethers gained on him. Position after position — a foot or two at a time — so they flowed on. And ever fiercer and faster also seethed the singing blizzard. Only, now its power to annoy him was on the wane. Notwithstanding the supreme physical exertion, his blood gradually chilled, a wonderful, delicious apathy crept softly over him. He was in the midst of the rout by this, with sheep on every side. But still he persevered, even while his drowsy eyelids met and would not again drag open.

Then came the moment when he could no longer heave up a sheep. Futile but unconquered, he dropped to his knees and pressed against the wethers with his numb hands. . . .

That was truly an extraordinary year in western-central Montana. In Pigeye Basin, practically no rain fell all spring and summer. The wild hay failed absolutely, the range baked and split open under the hot eye of the sun.

And if no rain fell in spring and summer, neither did the snow come with the advent of winter. On the eighth day of January, not a flake had yet drifted down. The far-Eastern owners of the Pigeye Basin Sheep Company wrote Davy Jones optimistic letters. Knowing he had no hay, they besought him to remember the good and appropriate axiom of the wind and the shorn lamb. On receipt of each one of these hopeful letters, Davy, whose thick brown hair was graying with worry, would rage and curse past human belief. If he couldn't round up hay somewhere before the snow flew, either with money or Winchesters! — and so on, and so on.

On the eighth day of January, perhaps the most extraordinary thing of all occurred. No snow arrived. But, at the home ranch, a lady did — a marvelously young and beautiful and delicate-mannered lady; such a creature as gross and sheep-smelling Pigeye could never even have dreamed of. She ravished the whole ranch by her mere slim, girlish presence on the place.

"I'm looking for a young man," she frankly told Davy Jones. "I've been trying to find him a long time — ever so long. It's grown to seem terribly hopeless. But something I heard a few days ago made me believe he might be here."

Davy, round-eyed (and his eyes were mostly narrowed nowadays), swept off his hat, pulled himself together.

"What for a young man would he be like, now, miss?" he propounded.

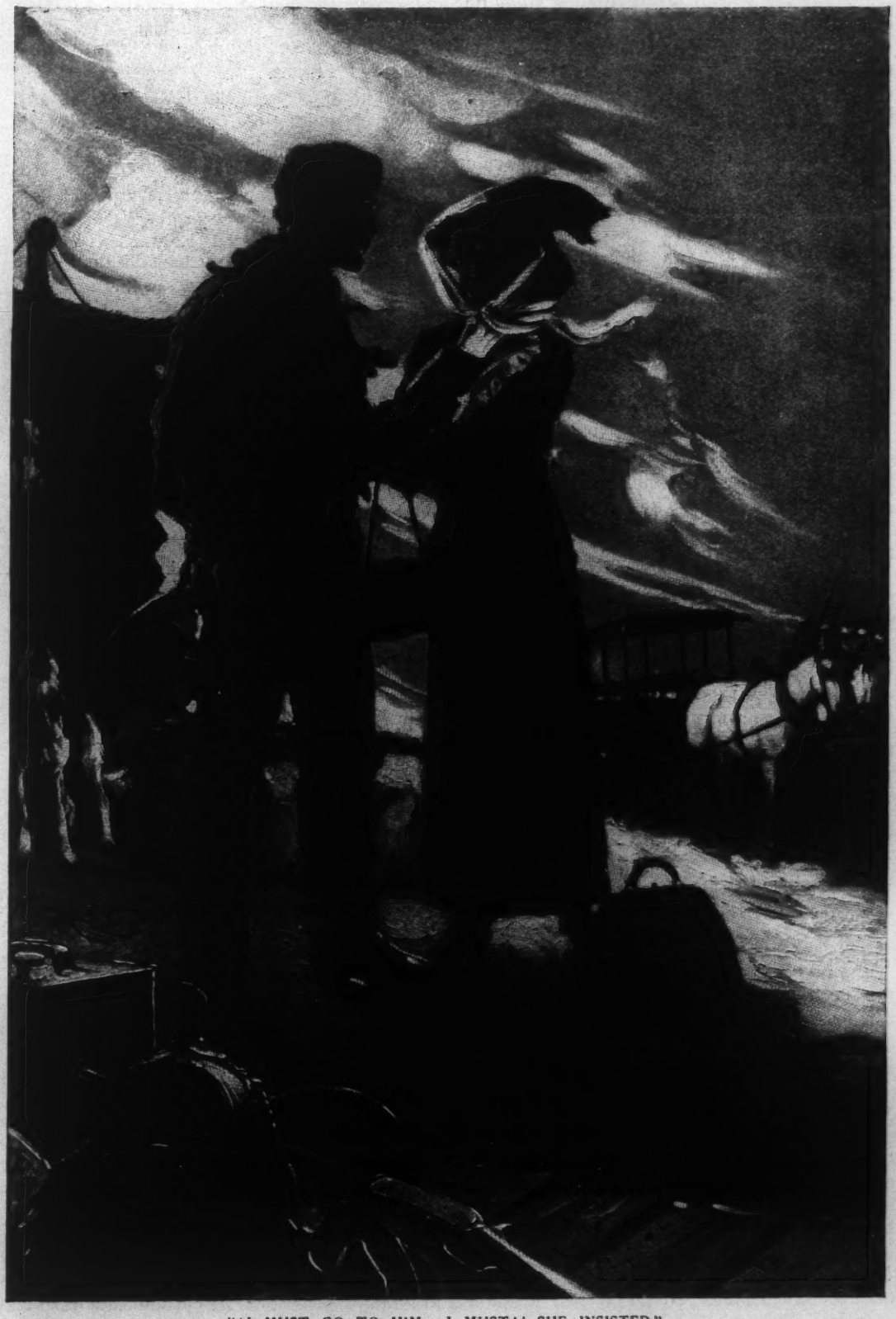
He was about gayly to add, would he — Mr. Jones — do. But, with her straightforward blue eyes on him, he somehow couldn't quite manage. "We got all kinds," he continued, instead.

"He's sensitive and poetic and unusual," said the girl. "You couldn't mistake him."

The ranch-boss scratched his trouble-burdened head, of the unkemptness of which he was at this moment profoundly ashamed. "Could you mebbe give me a kind of a line on his name?" he hinted. "Not that that there's any dead certain sure trail, neither," he made haste to explain.

"His name is John Walford Corvington," stated the girl. Davy began to shake his head. "But I know he wouldn't be using that out here."

"Not on Pigeye, undoubted," said Texas Davy Jones. He stopped and chewed his



"'I MUST GO TO HIM—I MUST!' SHE INSISTED"

grizzled beard. "But now I come to study on it, there *is* a kind of a stray, wild-eyed boy like you might be talkin' about out with a band on the summer range. We never call him anything but 'the kid' or 'the pilgrim.' I reckon he did give me a name, though. Wait till I take a squint at my book."

He got out his foreman's greasy and dog-eared volume; the combination ledger, journal, cash-book, time-book, and record of events and correspondence which covered the entire area of his dealings with the remote directorate of the Pigeye Basin Sheep Company. "Kid Star," he read aloud.

"Star — Star?" cried the girl.

"S-t-a-r," spelled Davy.

She all but caught him by the arm. "Oh, please — hurry! I want to be taken to him at once!"

Davy swayed back and forth on his wide-spread, hugely broganed feet. "It's thirty-odd miles out toward the foot-hills — that there camp," he observed. He blinked up at the sky. "An' two o'clock in the afternoon, an' mebbe threatenin' snow."

"I must go to him!" insisted the girl. "I must! I've been hunting him for six months." She fastened on Davy with entreating eyes. "Is it a matter of money?" She showed him her hand-bag, with bank-notes in it and a check-book. "I can pay."

"It ain't a matter of money," said Davy.

"I knew it wasn't!" she declared brightly. "Then you'll send me at once?"

Davy ruminated, measuring her up and down. "Have you got any idea at all, miss," he inquired, "that this here rangin' about by yourself over the sheep country might perhaps be the *least* trifle dangerous?"

"I've risked everything to find him," simply replied the girl. "And now I know he's here."

She had a certain air of power and importance, and Davy resentfully began to feel a new breath of responsibility on his own account. "I reckon you're not his sister?" he grunted.

"I'm his fiancée — his sweetheart — his girl. We were engaged to be married; I broke the engagement." She waved her hand toward the horizon. "And he left — like this. It was my fault."

Davy ruminated and swayed. "Well, as it happens," he produced at last, "my reg'lar camp-tender is an old man. He's here, an' I reckon I could sure trust him to take you out, all safe enough, so far as *that* goes."

"Then what is it?" demanded the girl.

"It's snow, miss — that's what it is." Again the Pigeye foreman sourly consulted the heavens. "This here snow can't hold off much longer. It can't! It's comin', an' it's comin' strong."

"I'm from New England," smiled the girl. "I've seen snow before."

"I tell you, now," suddenly and decisively concluded Davy Jones, "I tell you what. I'll bring that band in. You camp right down here in my quarters an' wait, or else drive back to town. I'll send out for the kid."

"I'd rather be going toward him," she protested.

Davy shook himself irritably. "Look'ee here, miss," he said, "you don't savvy how plumb bad things is. If we wasn't takin' the craziest chances in the world, that there boy an' his band would have been in two months ago. I got the ewe bands to protect, an' I'm keepin' them hardy young wethers out there because there ain't a pound of hay anywhere I can spare to give 'em. If a big snow ketches us, so they can't rustle for themselves, they're gone. But I'll bring 'em in now, so we'll anyway be sure o' the mutton an' the pelts. You'll see your lad then, all right, an' you won't be goin' off an' gettin' hung up in the snow, an' bein' on my hands too."

The girl brooded a moment, then looked swiftly up. "I'm sorry," she murmured, "but it's been too long. If you can't send me — I must go myself."

"I'll send you," says Davy. He swung on his heel, shouting: "Hey, Rink!"

From a near-by doorway the cook shoved out his head. "Wot is it?"

"Put up three days' chuck for two in a basket," commanded Davy. "Make it the best you got, an' have it ready in twenty minutes." He turned back to the girl. "Now come, miss. We'll go find George at the corral."

Up the coulées and round the feet of the scattered lone buttes they drove. There was no road, but French George's pair of tough little roan cayuses, hooked to the light camp-wagon, made astonishing head. The wise, withered old camp-tender himself, loosely crouched at one side of the sheepskin-covered wagon-seat, looked thoughtfully out across the range, forever leisurely smoking his pipe, and now and then talked to the girl. This old Canadian George, who might very well have Indian blood in him, still wore moccasins instead of civilized shoes; tending camp, in his decadence, on a Montana sheep-ranch, he yet somehow bespoke the world of romantic Northern adventure. The girl briefly felt herself drawn toward him,

lost all her isolated timidity and constraint. She asked him of the pilgrim, and he, in his half-dreamy, half-voluble French way, told her much.

"Ah, yaas, meess," he said. "Dat keed? Sure! I 'ave always lak dat keed. 'E ees de game leettle son, you bet you, an' no meestak. But ah, she 'ave been de bad long time for 'eem out on de range."

"How?" cried the eager girl. "How do you mean?"

George surveyed her with his philosophic old eyes. "Out on de range," he explained, "— no, I see eet, you do not savvy. Out on de range, meess — ah, eet ees lonely. Daire ees not anyt'eeng — not'eeng at all but de sky, an' de groun', an' de 'oss an' de dog an' de dam'-fool sheep. Ah, by gar, I know her! An' all de time de dam'-fool sheep ees bawl, an' de curlew an' keelldeer ees cry out to you een de evenin', an' de coyote howl een de night. Yaas, I tell you dat — she ees de lonely plass!"

"Oh, you frighten me!" shuddered the girl. "How does he look? When did you see him?"

"Eet ees de las' camp, meess — dose wethaire," George unhurriedly reported. "De keed 'ave tak de beeg chance een stay out so long. When deed I see heem? Maybeso eet ees t'ree, four week seence I 'ave been daire."

"And how did he look?" persisted the girl. "How did he look?"

"Well, de wildness — ah, eet was sure geet eento hees eye." George laughed. "But, by gar, de fine, long beard 'e ees grow, too — lak de seelk on de Eenjun corn!" Quickly he sobered again. "Oh, hi-yi, de crazy keed! De crazy keed, de crazy keed!"

"Why?" demanded the girl.

"Daire 'e was steeck heemself out seex month on de summaire range," said George, "an' not even de book an' de papiere to read een! No, saire; 'e deed not even 'ave de lettaire or de al-ma-*nac!*"

"You took him out something?" she besought.

George smiled complacently away across the range. "Yaas, I tak heem out — I geeve heem somet'eeng. I geeve heem maybeso de varrie bes' book een de worl'. I geeve heem, by gar, my ol' 'Robeenson Crusoe'!"

"Ah," breathed the girl. "I never read it — that."

"I t'eenk you weell read her when de keed tell you," sagely commented George. "I hope 'e ees not let de squirrel an' de mountain-rat chew her all up. I 'ave not read her all yet myself — not de las' part." Thoughtfully he smiled out across the range. "She sure ees de gran' stuff — dat ol' book."

So they looked ahead into the gray distance, toward the dark edges of the foot-hills, and talked. But it had been after three o'clock before they could get started away from the home ranch, and that lowering eighth day of January drew to an early close.

When the soft night blackness (for it was not cold) became absolutely impenetrable about them, they stopped and made camp. After supper, eaten beside a little fire on which they boiled the water for tea, George spread some robes and blankets for the girl in the bed of the wagon. His own bed-roll he took out and laid on the ground somewhere near the picketed horses.

The next morning, betimes, they were traversing the sage again. There could be no mistaking the promise of snow now.

"Oh, hi, you!" called George to the lead pony, slashing at it with the ends of his lines. "Heet along, daire!" He turned to the girl. "Eef we mak eet before de bleezzair', dese cayuse weell 'ave to 'ump."

He sent the tough little roans along at the best pace he knew how to get out of them and that kind of ground. And they accomplished wonders. But the flying snow whipped on faster than he did, and came in sight before the cabin and corral of the pilgrim's summer station. The old Hudson Bay camp-tender, however, felt no special alarm: he knew he had not more than a mile or so to go.

Yet — what a wind! In almost one great bound, the storm developed its superb and terrible fury.

"You climb back een de wagon, meess," George commanded the girl. "Wrap de robe all een close roun' you." He wiped the icy crust from his bush-browed eyes. "By gar, she sure ees de bleezzair' all right, you bet you!"

It was only by virtue of the instinct and intractable hardness of the range-bred horses that they won through. And then, when at last they pulled up in the lee of the pilgrim's log cabin, they found the place uninhabited and cold.

For the first time since the setting in of the storm, the slim and delicately nurtured young girl broke down. "I shall die here too!" she wailed. "O Jackie, Jackie! — where are you?"

George hustled her out of the wagon into the cabin. "Geet een!" he cried. "Climb enside!"

The rough interior of the little log hut was in immaculate order. Wood lay in the stove,

ready for lighting, and George fumbled about with matches and his stiffened fingers till he had got a fire started. Then he caught hold of the girl, who stood white and stony, staring at the room, and began feverishly to chafe her hands.

"Now, you leesten!" he ordered. "You steeck her out, an' maybeso she ees steell all right!"

"What shall I do?" she asked blankly.

"Fin' de coffee — boil de coffee!" He gave up the chafing and dragged her about the room with him. "'Ere!" From a long plank shelf against the wall he pulled down a large tin baking-powder can with ground coffee in it. "Yas, 'ere eet ees!" He thrust the can into her hands. "You mak de coffee! I weell go look for heem!"

"Where?" she demanded.

George pointed about the room. "'E feex de bed — 'e wash de deesh — 'e was 'ere dees morneeng! 'E ees geet ketch out een de bleezzair'! 'E ees stay out wid de dam'-fool sheep!"

"Where?" she dully demanded again.

"Hey!" shouted George. "I do not know! But eet ees not far! I weell go fin' heem!"

"I'll go with you," she said.

George leaped in the air and waved his arms. "By gar, you weell not!" he yelled. "I want de 'ot coffee — 'e weell want de 'ot coffee!" He ran for the door. "Now — I ride de 'oss! I preeck up de ear for de bawl of de sheep!"

Madly slamming the door to behind him, and making many uncouth wild gestures for the sake of his ancient circulation, the old camp-tender drew his sheath-knife and began violently to cut away the harness from his off horse. Then he clambered up on the snow-covered lean back, and jammed the pony's reluctant nose out down-wind into the storm. As he disappeared, bowed over the horse's neck, the girl saw him lift up the flap of his skin cap away from his ears, and strain his head out forward, in an effort to distinguish, somewhere in that vast, blurred, beautiful surrounding white muffle, the cry of the pilgrim's sheep. Her heart rebelled at such puerilities. What sound could there be in that huge suction of resistless silence? Her ears heard only one sound — the thin song of death.

As, heavily and reluctantly, the pony outside had borne the burden of George away into the storm, so, inside, heavily and reluctantly, the girl bore the burden of her hopelessness about with her in the room. The stove drew well, the wood was dry, and the fire began to crackle and emit a first faint ray of warmth. She found the coffee-pot (it also quite sweet and clean), and set water in it on the stove to boil. The movement and shelter and breath of heat gradually took hold of her, making her cold-congealed flesh sting and ache exquisitely. Seeing the patient, snow-mounded pony left standing in the wagon outside, she ran out and threw a buffalo-robe over him. He was shaking horribly.

Each moment life flowed back through her arteries with a fuller, more quickened force. The cabin's one window happily looked down-wind, and here she now stationed herself. The fire snapped and roared; a pleasant odor of burning wood diffused itself about the room. Once she left the window to put more of the neatly piled wood in the stove. When she got back to her outlook, a vague little cavalcade of two horses and a dog was just emerging from the edges of the great whirling southeasterly blur. A desperate cry strangled in her throat. Before him, on the withers of a saddled horse, George carried the amorphous, flaccid figure of a man.

Tottering, she flew and opened the door. A hybrid collie dog, joyfully barking and waving his snowy brush, jumped in. On the strange saddled pony, George followed with his load.

"Hey, I geet heem all right!" he cheerfully sang out to her. "'E ees 'bout all froze up — 'e ees not dress for de col'. But we weell breeng heem roun' een one, two meenute, you bet you!"

She sprang out and peered at the drooping face, pallid, bearded, streaked and incrusted with snow and ice. "O Jackie, Jackie!" she called.

For three long days and nights, that unparalleled storm flung its magnificence and rigors against the walls of the little log hut. Inside, on his bunk, the pilgrim rambled deliriously on about the loss of four thousand Pigeye wethers.

"All gone, all gone," he mourned. "There they go — hold 'em, Alec! No, he can't — there they go — all gone!"

"O Jackie!" pleaded the girl, kneeling beside him on the floor, "*don't* think of the sheep!"

"Bah!" chimed in French George, from the other side of the bed, snapping his fingers. "*Dat* for de dam'-fool sheep!"

"They wouldn't drive," monotonously repeated the boy; "they wouldn't drive. Would they, Alec — eh, old chap? They wouldn't drive, Alec, would they?"

From his place on the floor, the dog yelped and wagged his tail.

"A DESPERATE CRY STRANGLED IN HER THROAT. SHE SPRANG OUT AND PEERED AT THE DROOPING FACE, INCRUSTED WITH SNOW AND ICE"

"No — see? It wasn't your fault, Jackie," persuaded the girl. "See? They kept you out here too long. And see how you stayed with the sheep in the blizzard! Nobody else would! It was brave and honorable — everybody will say so! But — if it would make you the least bit easier, you know, Jackie — why, see — we can pay them for the sheep, can't we?"

"I'm a star-gazer," he muttered. "A star-gazer. I'll never make a man — a real man — like my father."

"O Jackie!" she moaned. "*Don't* say that — *don't* remember that! You kill me! I didn't mean it — I never meant it! You're the bravest boy — the bravest, strongest man — in the world, Jackie! Your father died by sticking at his work — yes. But it was for money. You would have died at yours — without anybody knowing of it — for honor!"

"John Corvington, star-gazer," scornfully continued the pi grim He laughed. "Yes, you've found your level, John Corvington. You're a born sheep-herder." He paused and restlessly turned his head. "Only, you lose your sheep."

There were two days and nights of this. George grew desperate.

"By gar!" he cried. "No wondaire 'e ees not geet well. 'E ees not eat anyt'eeng. Dese bean an' coffee an' sowbelly ees not de good chuck for de seeck man. Wait."

He went out in the slackening storm, found a frozen wether, and brought it in. "Now we weell 'ave de fine lam' soup," he said.

George expertly made the soup, and the girl got the pilgrim to swallow some of it. Already his fever was on the wane, and that night he slept without delirium. The next morning he waked clear-eyed, with a yawn. The girl slipped down from the robe-hammock George had made her, and stood beside him.

"Edith!" he marveled. "Where — where am I?"

"Oh, we're somewhere in Montana together," she laughed, putting her hands on his face. "But we're going home now." Still laughing, she bent her own flushed young face low over him. "Only, you must marry me first. Nobody would speak to me."

THE BOY FROM BALLYTEARIM

BY

MOIRA O'NEILL

HE was born in Ballytearim, where there' little work to do,
An' the longer he was livin' there, the poorer still he grew;
Says he till all belongin' him, "Now, happy may ye be!
But I'm off to find me fortune," sure he says, says he.

"All the gold in Ballytearim is what's stickin' to the whin;
All the crows in Ballytearim has a way o' gettin' thin."
So the people did be praisin' him the year he wint away —
"Troth, I'll hould ye can do it," sure they says, says they.

Och, the boy 'ud still be thinkin' long, an' he across the foam,
An' the two ould hearts be thinkin' long that waited for him home:
But a girl that sat her lone an' whiles, her head upon her knee,
Would be sighin' low for sorra — not a word says she.

He won home to Ballytearim, an' the two were livin' yet.
When he heard where she was lyin' now, the eyes of him were wet.
"Faith, here's me two fists fûll o' gold, an' little good to me
When I'll never meet an' kiss her," sure he says, says he.

Then the boy from Ballytearim set his face another road,
An' whatever luck has followed him was never rightly knowed:
But still it's truth I'm tellin' ye — or may I never sin!
All the gold in Ballytearim is what's stickin' to the whin.

MADAME SIMONE CASIMIR-PÉRIER
WHOSE SUCCESSFUL AMERICAN APPEARANCE WAS MADE IN OWEN JOHNSON'S ADAPTATION OF THE FRENCH PLAY, "THE RETURN TO JERUSALEM"

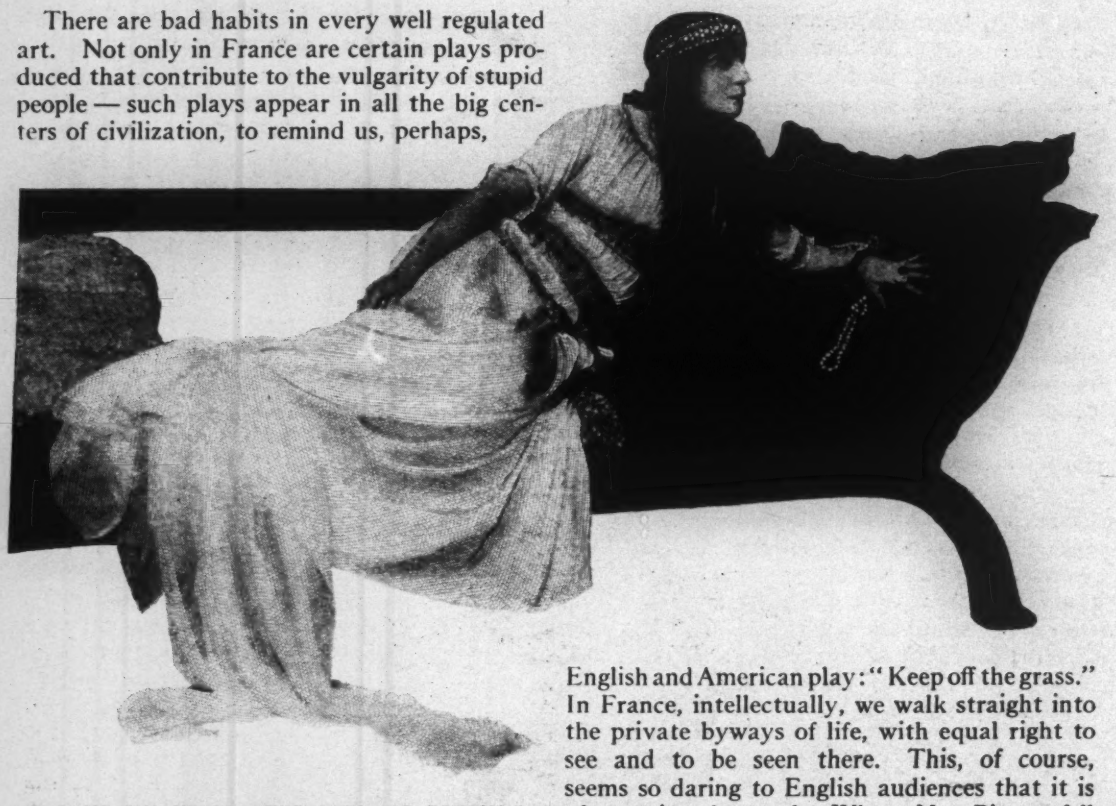
WHY FRENCH PLAYS SEEM DARING

BY MADAME SIMONE CASIMIR-PÉRIER

IN my own experience as an actress on the French stage I have yet to find the French play of any artistic value to posterity that is not a work of art fit for the most exacting intelligence; but everything depends upon what is expected by an audience.

For a long time, I am told, Americans were quite sure that a French play must be something naughty. They have outgrown this obsession, but there still remains, in certain parts of this vast continent, a lingering suspicion that the French play is a thing of frills and ribbons, in which the Ten Commandments are not so reliably kept as they should be.

There are bad habits in every well regulated art. Not only in France are certain plays produced that contribute to the vulgarity of stupid people — such plays appear in all the big centers of civilization, to remind us, perhaps,



MADAME SIMONE IN "THE LADY OF DREAMS," THE ENGLISH ADAPTATION OF ROSTAND'S PLAY, "LA PRINCESSE LOINTAINE"

that we are not as bad as we are painted. One's point of view, however, is not the inexorable test of intelligence.

It would be scarcely fair to the subject to class the actually offensive performances, in Paris or other world centers, as representative plays. They are not so at all. Nor do I think that the French play would be of any artistic value to the theater in Paris if it sought the middle of the road always in its appeal to the masses. There are plays I have seen on the American stage, among the great successes, that could not last a week in Paris: not because they were tame,— that is not the chief reason,— but because they flutter intellectually, and are constructively too lame for the European knowledge of drama. To put on the English-speaking stage an absolutely truthful picture of what we see is comparatively easy, but to put before an English audience the secret sins of their souls is a dangerous experiment. That is one reason why the French play seems daring perhaps, because it tears up the traditional hedge that hides the secrets in the private gardens of experience.

The French play never minds the warning sign I have seen so often symbolized in the English and American play: "Keep off the grass." In France, intellectually, we walk straight into the private byways of life, with equal right to see and to be seen there. This, of course, seems so daring to English audiences that it is often misunderstood. When Mr. Pinero fell under the spell of French art and wrote "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" in England, the truth about such matters as social sins was almost a forbidden subject on the English stage. Mr. Pinero, more than any other writer of plays in the English language, dared to break down the hedge of theatrical propriety. Nothing could be more sincere or more immaculately fine in its purpose than this daring English play. It grew out of what was sacred soil to England — the conflict of home life. In France, the writers had been digging and planting new seeds in this sacred soil for years and years, and their purpose was none the less reverent — the purpose to help and strengthen the marriage question.

The French Fearless in Facing the Marriage Question

For a long time the French theater had attempted the task with crude effect, because the line between the stage and home life of France is still severely drawn. In fact, it is a grave question whether the theater in France is not socially the least desirable place for a career. This is because there is a deep and innate love for the propriety of home life in France that is more severe in its standards than that of any other country.

In France, divorce is a tragedy. The man grows gray and still remains obedient to the influence and advice of his mother in this matter. So well grounded in the Catholic religion are the French people that they can look their problems of passion in the face without fear. On these issues many French plays are constructed. If the foundations are deep enough a building may reach the sky. The morals of a French play seem daring, perhaps, to audiences in those countries where the discussion of morals is feared. The plays that reflect the most flagrant violations of the established code of morals in France are not the most successful, even though they achieve a certain distinction as works of art, of construction, of psychology.

The French are a sensitive people, but on the whole a religious people, obedient to the responsibilities of their faith. They suffer keenly in the conflict of their nature — which is gay, spontaneous, intellectual — with the rigid moral standard of their church. They are not afraid to suffer; therefore they meet every issue of their lives frankly, without hypocrisy.

SCENE BETWEEN MELISSINDA ("THE LADY OF DREAMS") AND THE KNIGHT OF THE VERDANT ARMOR, ACT II

It is difficult to explain the sensibility and passion for truth, in the French people, that has drawn the theater into its discussion of questions which, in other countries, are a matter of secret conflict. That is one reason, perhaps, why some French plays seem daring to the world outside our own in Paris.

Things Can Be Said in French that Are Impossible in English

Then, too, I'm afraid that the French play loses its soul in the English translation. There are things that can be said in French that are frankly impossible in English — impossible because the French word reaches for the idea gracefully, and the English word seizes it offensively. And yet, the idea is the same, but dressed up in French it is presentable, whereas, clothed in English, it becomes harsh and forbidding. This is something that is quite inexplicable, but effectively true. It is the ingenuity of the French language that has sown deep the seeds of gaiety in the most violently tragic and spectacular history of the nations, which is the history of France. We rise above the shadows, and out of the mist of our intellectual and moral struggles, on the wings of French literature and art.

The dialogue of the French play seems daring, because there is no forbidden conversation in France. We have a language that is equal to any embarrassment of fact. It is not that we are cynical or worldly wise; it is because we go to the roots of our problems that we flourish.

For instance, in the theme of many French plays, which is love, the man who is in love with a married woman is a chief consideration. Even in America he is often in the newspapers, and in England he betrays himself with stolid superiority of thought. The lover is the dramatic key, in a French play, that opens the door to one of the most serious conflicts of life. It is a conflict more serious in France than in other countries where divorce is not such a tragedy.

All drama is based on conflict, and in France the problems of home are the most vital. This is because we are a people of simple ideals, not a complex, frivolous nation, by any means. If the English writers dare, they usually suffer by comparison with French plays. There is something in the manner of thinking and expressing these daring questions of intimate confession in the theater that has a great deal to do with their value as entertainment. In the French play, behind the ugliest fact lies the light of promised ideals, which is one of the charming possibilities of the French language.

Daring Subjects Not the Most Popular with French Audiences

"Camille" has been loved by the women of all the world, and yet, in the sense of what is daring in the theater, "Camille" is essentially French. Of course, we have gone much further into the hidden truths of domestic infelicity on the French stage since "Camille" was written, but we have done so with an ever-increasing sense of the higher purpose of these dramas of life. When the French writer attempts to reveal a social condition, he does not do his work as if he were afraid of the subject, but neither does he forget that his task as a dramatist is to amuse the public. His gaiety may not always be comprehensible to English audiences, though.

We are by instinct a happy people, but we are not pretenders to virtues greater than we have. Nor is it true that the French people are satisfied only with plays that deal with daring subjects. The greatest successes in Paris have been plays that dealt with the sweeter love stories. Nothing pleases a French audience so much as the story of true love between youthful sweethearts. Another favorite theme is the autumn love story in which the devotion between two old people retains its flavor of romance. I could name dozens of these plays.

MADAME SIMONE MADE HER DÉBUT IN "LE DÉTOUR," BY BERNSTEIN. SHE WAS AN UNKNOWN ACTRESS, HE WAS AN UNKNOWN PLAYWRIGHT, AND THIS WAS HIS FIRST PLAY. HER SUCCESS MADE BOTH OF THEM FAMOUS

In farce and comedy the French playwright has used all the license of the language and situation to accomplish his ends, and in some cases he has been daring for entertaining reasons. There are certain theaters in Paris where the plays produced are intentionally daring. I am told that there are theaters in America where this form of entertainment is given also. It may be true, to some degree, that the French playwright has carried his invasion of ideas into the theater with a free hand. This, I think, is due largely to the fact that we have a coterie of French writers who are Intellectuals. The members of the Royal Academy of France feel the burden of literary distinction put upon them. Their plays are often of the daring sort because much is expected of them. The literary quality of the plays written by the Royal Academicians is usually an important part of their task. Their plays are not always successful, but they are distinguished. Then, too, the modern note on the French stage which was first established by the unsuccessful but splendid plays of poor Henri Becque no longer demands suppression of idea or character. When a play dealing with a contemporary social evil is written in English, every one turns hypocrite and holds up his hands in horror; and the poor ambitious theater is blamed, when it should be encouraged.

Of course, there is always the point of view to be taken into consideration. Some of us can not see the truth well, some of us become nervous when we do see it, and some of us deny the unpleasant truth. The principle of the modern French play is to tell the truth, however. Without compromise, naturally, some truths are almost impossible of belief. But there is no forbidden fact to the French playwright; there are only forbidden forms of fact. It is in these forms that the French plays dare on dangerous grounds.

In Germany, they enjoy plays that are as horrible in their analysis of gloom as any of Dante's works. In France we are Utopians. We swallow our bitter truths with a smile. We compromise everything with artistic simile. The French stage is not a museum; it is a mirror. If we lose our character by seeing ourselves in the looking-glass, it is at least something gained for truth; but in France, as every woman knows, we use our mirrors to enlighten the fashions of the world. We study the lines of grace; we aim to soften the hard truths, to overcome the awkwardness of youth, the vanity of middle age, the stiffness of old age. No thought in France is unfit for the skill and romance of the French language. When almost smothered by the brutalities of human nature, the French playwright turns to the poetic instinct of his race, and survives in the purer air of his natural existence.

MADAME SIMONE IS A JEWESS, AND HER MOST SUCCESSFUL PLAYS HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY A JEWISH PLAYWRIGHT. "THE RETURN TO JERUSALEM," HER FOREMOST AMERICAN PRODUCTION, DEALS WITH THE TEMPERAMENTAL CONFLICT BETWEEN THE JEW AND THE GENTILE

No French play of any value lacks the oxygen of poetry, for ideals nourish the French republic, however the politicians may sometimes adulterate them. It is not the daring of a play that makes it a success on the French stage; it is not the intellectual scope, either: it is by the depth of its moral sincerity that it succeeds. This statement is a contradiction of the generally accepted idea of a successful French play, but a little investigation will prove the truth of it. For instance, there is always the great moment of sacrifice, in a French play, that speaks for itself, that achieves the moral issue. There is the sacrifice of Camille, of Frou-frou, and of nearly every daring heroine of the French stage.

The more one looks into this question of why French plays seem daring, the more unjust the question seems to the facts. The French stage has not been more daring than the stage of other countries. It has been maligned by improper translations and by unscrupulous producers. As one of many serious-minded French actresses, I can only insist that, on moral grounds, the French people are the most exacting audiences in the world. While they decline to be hypocrites, they do demand an aspiring ending to their plays, a survival of their ideals of the home.

THE AMATEUR GENTLEMAN

BY JEFFERY FARNOL

AUTHOR OF "THE BROAD HIGHWAY"

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HERMAN PFEIFER

Preceding instalments.—Barnabas Barty, son of the retired champion pugilist of England, being left a fortune of £700,000, decides to go to London and become a gentleman. On his way he meets with Lady Cleone Meredith, who has been thrown from her horse, and in going to her assistance he quarrels with Sir Mortimer Carnaby, the King's favourite. At an inn where he stops with his friend, the Viscount Horatio Bellasis, Barnabas learns that Sir Mortimer Carnaby is plotting to marry Lady Cleone for her fortune, and that she has consented to meet his go-between, a profligate courtier named Chichester, in a lonely spot at sundown. Barnabas arrives at the rendezvous first, forces Chichester to retire, and, when Lady Cleone comes, offers to escort her back to her guardian. In the explanation that follows, Barnabas learns that Lady Cleone had come to the tryst expecting to meet her half-brother, Ronald Barrymaine, a young scapegrace whose gambling exploits have thrown him into Chichester's power. Barnabas tells Lady Cleone that he loves her, and promises to seek out her brother in London and to try to save him. On his return to the inn, Barnabas is challenged by Chichester to a duel. But, as Barnabas will only consent to fight in such a way that both men must inevitably be killed, the duel is dropped. Barnabas reaches London, buys a horse that no one else can ride, and begs the Viscount to get him entered in the great steeplechase which all the young bloods of London are to ride. Through a vagabond named Smivvle, Barnabas gets on the track of Ronald Barrymaine.

Barnabas Gives a Dinner-Party

AT precisely four o'clock on the afternoon of his third day in London, Barnabas stood before a cheval mirror in the dressing-room of his new house, surveying his reflection with a certain complacent satisfaction. His silver-buttoned blue coat, high-waisted and cunningly rolled of collar, was a sartorial triumph; his black stockinet pantaloons, close fitting from hip to ankle and there looped and buttoned, accentuated muscled calf and virile thigh in a manner somewhat disconcerting; his snowy waistcoat was of an original fashion and cut; and his cravat, folded and caressed into being by Peterby's skilled fingers,

was an elaborate masterpiece, a matchless creation never before seen upon the town. Barnabas had become a dandy, from the crown of his curly head to his silk stockings and polished shoes, and, upon the whole, was not ill pleased with himself.

"But they're — dangerously tight, aren't they, Peterby?" he enquired suddenly, speaking his thought aloud.

"Tight, sir?" exclaimed Peterby, from where he knelt upon the floor, having just finished looping and buttoning the garments in question. "Indeed, sir, since you mention it, I almost fear they are a trifle too — roomy. Can you raise your bent knee, sir?"

"Only with an effort, John."

"That settles it, Barry," said Peterby, with a grim nod; "you must take them in at least a quarter of an inch."

"Take 'em in?" exclaimed Barnabas, aghast. "No, I'll be shot if you do — not a fraction. I can scarcely — manage 'em as it is."

Peterby shook his head in grave doubt; but at this juncture they were interrupted by a discreet knock — and, the door opening, a Gentleman in Powder appeared. He was a languid gentleman, an extremely superior gentleman; but his character lay chiefly in his nose, which was short and remarkably supercilious of tip, and his legs, which were large and nobly shaped; they were, in a sense, eloquent legs, being given to divers tremours and quiverings when their possessor laboured under any strong feeling or excitement.

"Are you in, sir?" he enquired in an utterly impersonal tone.

"In?" repeated Barnabas, with a quick downward glance at his tight nether garments. "In? In what?— in where?"

"Are you at 'ome, sir?"

"At home? Of course; can't you see that?"

"Yes, sir," returned the Gentleman in Powder, his legs growing a little agitated.

"Then why do you ask?"

"There is a — person below, sir."

"A person?"

"Yes, sir; very much so. Got 'is foot in the door — wouldn't take it out — had to let 'im in. Waiting in the 'all, sir."

"What's he like? Who is he?"

"Whiskers, sir — name of Snivels — no card!" Here might have been observed the same agitation of the plump legs.

"Ask him to wait."

"Beg pardon, sir — did you say — to wait?" (Agitation growing.)

"Yes. Say I'll be down at once." (Agitation extreme.)

"Meaning as you will — see 'im, sir?" (Agitation indescribable.)

"Yes," said Barnabas; "yes, of course."

The Gentleman in Powder bowed; his eye was calm, his brow unruffled, but his legs! — and his nose was more supercilious than ever as he closed the door upon it.

Mr. Smivvle, meantime, was standing downstairs before a mirror, apparently lost in contemplation of his whiskers.

"Six pair of silver candlesticks!" he murmured. "Persian rugs! Bric-à-brac, costly! Pictures, rare! He's a nabob, by heaven; yes, he is. A mysterious young nabob wallowing in wealth! Five shillings? Preposterous! We'll make it a pound!" He was still lost in contemplation of the luxurious appointments that everywhere met his view, and was seriously considering the advisability of "making it" thirty shillings, when the appearance of Barnabas cut him short, and he at once became all smiles, flourishes, and whiskers.

"Ah, Beverley, my boy!" he cried heartily, "pray forgive this horribly unseasonable visit; but, under the circumstances, I felt it my duty to — ah — to drop in on you, my dear fellow."

"What circumstances?" demanded Barnabas, a little stiffly, perhaps.

"Circumstances affecting our friend Barrymaine, sir."

"Ah?" said Barnabas, his tone changing. "What of him?— though, you forget, Mr. Barrymaine and I are still strangers."

"By heaven, you are right, sir — though, egad! I'm only a little previous, eh, my dear fellow?" And, smiling engagingly, Mr. Smivvle followed Barnabas into a side room, and, shutting the door with elaborate care, immediately shook his whiskers and heaved a profound sigh. "My friend Barrymaine is low, sir — devilish low," he proceeded to explain; "indeed, I'm quite distressed for the poor fellow, 'pon my soul and honour I am, for he is — in a manner of speaking — in eclipse, as it were, sir!"

"I fear I don't understand," said Barnabas.

"Why, then, in plain words, my dear Beverley, he's suffering from an acute attack of the Jews, damn 'em!— a positive seizure, sir!"

"Do you mean he has been taken — for debt?"

"Precisely, my dear fellow. An old affair — ages ago — a stab in the dark! Nothing very much — in fact, a mere bagatelle; only, as luck will have it, I am damnably short myself just now."

"How much is it?"

"Altogether, exactly twenty-five pound ten. An absurd sum, but all my odd cash is on the race. So I ventured here on my young friend's behalf to ask for a trifling loan. A pound — or, say, thirty shillings would be something."

"LOOKING DOWN UPON THE SLEEPER, BARNABAS FELT HIS HEART LEAP. HE SAW A FACE WHICH, FOR ALL ITS YOUTH, WAS MARRED BY THE TRACE OF FIERCE, UNGOVERNED PASSIONS"

Barnabas crossed to a cabinet, unlocked a drawer, and, taking thence a smallish bag that jingled, began to count out a certain sum upon the table.

"You said twenty-five pounds ten, I think?" said Barnabas, and pushed that amount across the table.

Mr. Smivvle stared from the money to Barnabas and back again, and felt for his whisker with fumbling fingers.

"Sir," he said, "you can't — you don't mean to — to ——"

"Yes," said Barnabas, turning to relock the drawer.

Mr. Smivvle's hand dropped from his whiskers. "Sir," he stammered, "I can not allow — no, indeed, sir! Mr. Beverley, you overwhelm me ——"

"Debts are necessary evils," said Barnabas, "and must be paid."

Mr. Smivvle stared at Barnabas, his brow furrowed by perplexity — stared like one who is suddenly at a loss; and, indeed, his usual knowing air was quite gone. Then, dropping his gaze to the money on the table, he swept it into his pocket almost furtively, and took up his hat and cane — and it is worthy of note that he did it all without a flourish.

"Mr. Beverley," said he, "in the name of my friend Barrymaine, I thank you, and — I — I thank you!" So he turned and went out of the room, and as he went he even forgot to swagger.

Then Barnabas crossed to a mirror and once more fell to studying his reflection with critical eyes. In the midst of his examination, he was interrupted by the calves of the Gentleman in Powder, which presented themselves at the doorway with the announcement:

"Viscount Deafenem, sir!"

Barnabas started and hurried forward, very conscious, very nervous, and for once uncertain of himself by reason of his new and unaccustomed splendour. But the look in the Viscount's boyish eyes, his smiling nod of frank approval, and the warm clasp of his hand, were vastly reassuring.

"Why, Bev, that coat's a marvel!" he exclaimed impulsively. "It is — I swear it is! Turn round — so! 'Gad, what a fit!"

"I hoped you'd approve of it, Dick," said Barnabas, a little flushed. "You see, I know very little about such things, and ——"

"Approve of it, my dear fellow! And the cut!"

"Now — as for these — er — pantaloons, Dick?"

"Dashing, my dear fellow, devilish dashing!"

"But rather too — too tight, don't you think?"

"Can't be, Bev; tighter the better. Have 'em made too tight to get into; and you're right. Look at mine. If I bend I split. Deuced uncomfortable, but all the mode, and a man must wear something!" Hereupon the Viscount, having walked round Barnabas three times and viewed him critically from every angle, nodded with an air of finality. "Yes, they do you infinite credit, my dear fellow — like everything else." And he cast a comprehensive glance round the luxurious apartment.

"The credit of it all rests entirely with Peterby," said Barnabas. "John, where are you?" But Peterby had disappeared.

"You're the most incomprehensible fellow, Bev," said the Viscount, seating himself on the edge of the table and swinging a leg. "You have been a constant surprise to me ever since you found me — er — ruminating in the bilboes. And now" — here he shook his head gravely — "and now it seems you are to become a source of infernal worry and anxiety as well."

"I hope not, Dick."

"You are, though," repeated the Viscount, looking graver than ever.

"Why?"

"Because — well, because you evidently are bent upon dying young."

"How so, Dick?"

"Well, if you ride in the race and don't break your neck, Carnaby will want a word with you; and if he doesn't shoot you, why, then Chichester certainly will — next time, damn him!"

"Next time?"

"Oh, I know all about your little affair with him — across the table. 'Gad, Beverley, what a perfectly reckless fellow you are!"

"But — how do you know of this?"

"From Clemency."

"So you've seen her again, Dick?"

"Yes, of course; that is, I took Moonraker for a gallop yesterday, and — happened to be that way."

"Ah!" said Barnabas.

"And she told me — everything," said the Viscount, beginning to stride up and down the room, with his usual placidity quite gone. "I mean, about — about the button you found — it was that devil Chichester's, it seems — and — and — Beverley, give me your hand! She told me how you confronted the fellow. Ha! I'll swear you had him shaking in his villain's shoes, duellist as he is."

"But," said Barnabas, as the Viscount caught his hand, "it was not altogether on Clemency's account, Dick."

"No matter; you frightened the fellow off. Oh, I know; she told me — I made her! She

"'DID YOU THINK YOU COULD BUY ME?' HE

had to fight with the beast — that's how he lost his button. I tell you, if ever I get the chance at him — he or I shall get his quietus. By heaven, Bev, I'm half minded to send the brute a challenge, as it is!"

"Because of Clemency, Dick?"

"Well — and why not?"

"The Earl of Bamborough's son fight a duel over the chambermaid of a hedge-tavern?"

The Viscount's handsome face grew suddenly red, and as suddenly pale again, and his eyes glowed as he fronted Barnabas across the hearth.

"Mr. Beverley," said he very quietly, "how am I to take that?"

"In friendship, Dick; for the truth of it is that, though she is as brave, as pure, as beautiful as any in the land, she is a chambermaid none the less."

The Viscount turned, and, striding to the window, stood there, looking out with bent head.

"Have I offended you?" enquired Barnabas.

"You go — too far, Beverley."

"I would go further yet — for my friend, Viscount."

Now, when Barnabas said this, the Viscount's head drooped lower and he stood silent. Then, all at once, he turned, and, coming to the hearth, the two stood looking at each other.

"Yes, I believe you would, Beverley. But you have a way of jumping to conclusions that is —

CRIED. 'DID YOU THINK I'D SACRIFICE MY SISTER?'"

devilish disconcerting. As for Chichester, the world would be well rid of him. And, talking of him, I met another rascal as I came. I mean that fellow Smivvle. Had he been here?"

"Yes."

"Begging, I suppose?"

"He borrowed some money for his friend Barrymaine."

The Viscount flushed hotly, and looked at Barnabas with a sudden frown.

"Perhaps you are unaware that is a name I never allow spoken in my presence, Mr. Beverley."

"Indeed, Viscount; and, pray, why not?"

"For one thing, because he is — what he is."

"Lady Cleone's brother."

"Half-brother, sir — and none the less a — knave."

"How?"

"I mean that he is a card-sharper — a common cheat."

"Her brother?"

"Half-brother!"

"A cheat! Are you sure?"

"Certain! I had the misfortune to make the discovery. And it killed him in London. All the clubs shut their doors upon him, of course; he was cut in the streets; it is damning to be seen in his company or even to mention his name now."

"And you — you exposed him?"

"I said — I made the discovery; but I kept it to myself. The stakes were unusually high that night, and we played late. I went home with him; but Chichester was there, waiting for him. So I took him aside, and, in as friendly a spirit as I could, told him of my discovery. He broke down and, never attempting a denial, offered restitution and promised amendment. I gave my word to keep silent, and, on one pretext or another, the loser's money was returned. But next week the whole town hummed with the news. One night — it was at White's — he confronted me, and — he gave me — the lie!" The Viscount's fists were tight clenched and he stared down blindly at the floor. "And, sir, though you'll scarcely credit it, of course, I — there, before them all — I took it."

"Of course," said Barnabas; "for her sake."

"Beverley!" exclaimed the Viscount, looking up with a sudden light in his eyes. "Oh, Bev!" And their hands met and gripped.

"You couldn't do anything else, Dick."

"No, Bev, no; but I'm glad you understand. Later it got about that I — that I was — afraid of the fellow. He's a dead shot, they say, young as he is, and — well, it — it wasn't pleasant, Bev. Indeed, it got worse until I called out one of Chichester's friends and 'winged' him — a fellow named Dalton."

"I think I've seen him," said Barnabas, nodding.

"Anyhow, Barrymaine was utterly discredited and done for; he's an outcast, and to be seen with him, or his friends, is to be damned also."

"And yet," said Barnabas, sighing and shaking his head, "I must call upon him to-morrow."

"Call upon him! Man, are you mad?"

"No; but he is her brother, and ——"

"And, as I tell you, he is banned by society as a cheat!"

"And is that so great a sin, Dick?"

"Are there any — worse?"

"Oh, yes; one might kill a man in a duel, or dishonour a trusting woman, or blast a man's character; indeed, it seems to me that there are many greater sins!"

The Viscount dropped back in his chair and stared at Barnabas with horrified eyes.

"My — dear — Beverley," said he at last, "are you — serious?"

"My dear Viscount, of course I am."

"Then, let me warn you, such views will never do here; any one holding such views will never succeed in London."

"Yet I mean to try," said Barnabas, squaring his jaw.

"But why," said the Viscount impatiently, "why trouble yourself about such a fellow?"

"Because she loves him, and because she asked me to help him."

"She — asked you to?"

"Yes."

"And — do you think you can?"

"I shall try."

"How?"

"First, by freeing him from debt."

"Do you know him? Have you ever met him?"

"No, Dick; but I love his sister."

"And because of this you'd shoulder his debts? Ah, but you can't, and, if you ask me why, I tell you because Jasper Gaunt has got him and means to keep him. To my knowledge, Barrymaine has twice had the money to liquidate his debt; but Gaunt has put him off, on one pretext or another, until the money has all slipped away. I tell you, Bev, Jasper Gaunt has got him in his clutches — as he's got Sling, and poor George Danby, and — God knows how many more — as he'd get me if he could! Yes, Gaunt has got his claws into him, and he'll never let him go again — never."

"Then," said Barnabas, "I must see Jasper Gaunt as soon as may be."

"Oh, by all means," nodded the Viscount, "if you have a taste for snakes and spiders and vermin of that sort. Slingsby will show you where to find him; Slingsby knows his den well enough — poor old Sling! But look to yourself, for spiders sting and snakes bite, and Jasper Gaunt does both."

The knuckles of the Gentleman in Powder here made themselves heard, and thereafter the door opened to admit his calves, which were immediately eclipsed by the Marquis, who appeared to be in a state of unwonted hurry.

"What, have I beat Slingsby, then?" he enquired, glancing round the room. "He was close behind me in Piccadilly; must have had a spill — that's the worst of those high curricles. As a matter of fact," he proceeded to explain, "I rushed round here — that is, we both did, but I've got here first — to tell you that — Oh, dooce take me!" — and out came the Marquis's eye-glass. "Positively you must excuse me, my dear Beverley. Thought I knew 'em all, but no — damme if I ever saw the fellow to yours! Permit me!" Saying which, the Marquis gently led Barnabas to the window, and began to study his cravat with the most profound interest.

"By George, Devenden," he exclaimed suddenly, "it's new!"

"'Gad!" said the Viscount, "now you come to mention it, so it is!"

"Positively — new!" repeated the Marquis

in an awe-struck voice, staring at the Viscount wide-eyed. "D'you grasp the importance of this, Devenden? D'you see the possibilities, Dick? It will create a sensation; it will set all the clubs by the ears, by George! We shall have the Prince galloping up from Brighton! By heaven, it's stupendous! Permit me, my dear Beverley. See, here we have three folds and a tuck; then — oh, Jupiter, it's a positive work of art! How the deuce d'you tie it? Never saw anything approaching this, and I've tried 'em all — the Mailcoach, the Trone d'Amour, the Osbaldistone, the Napoleon, the Irish tie, the Mathematical tie, and the Oriental. No, 'pon my honour, it's unique, it's — it's —" The Marquis sighed, shook his head, and, words failing him, took out his enamelled snuff-box. "Sir," said he, "I have the very highest regard for a man of refined taste, and, if there is one thing in which that manifests itself more than another, it is the cravat. Sir, I make you free of my box; pray honour me." And the Marquis flicked open his snuff-box and extended it toward Barnabas, with a bow.

"My lord," said Barnabas, shaking his head, "I appreciate the honour you do me, but pray excuse me — I never take it."

"No?" said the Marquis, with raised brows. "You astonish me. But then, between ourselves, neither do I. Can't bear the infernal stuff. Makes me sneeze most damnably. Still, one must conform to fashion, and ——"

"Captain Slingsby!"

The Gentleman in Powder had scarcely articulated the words when the Captain had gripped Barnabas by the hand.

"Congratulate you, Beverley, heartily."

"Thank you — but why?" enquired Barnabas.

"Eh — what? Hasn't Jerningham told you? B'gad, is it possible you don't know ——"

"Why, dooce take me, Sling, if I didn't forget!" said the Marquis, clapping hand to thigh. "His cravat put everything else out of my nob, and small wonder, either! You tell him."

"No," answered the Captain. "I upset a cursed apple-stall on my way here — you got in first; tell him yourself."

"Why, then, Beverley," said the Marquis, extending his hand, in his turn, as he spoke, "we have pleasure, Sling and I, to tell you that you are entered for the race on the 10th."

"The race!" exclaimed Barnabas, flushing. "You mean I'm to ride, then?"

"Yes," nodded the Captain; "but, b'gad, we mean more than that. We mean that you are one of us — that Devenden's friend must be ours because he's game ——"

"And can ride," said the Viscount.

"And is a man of taste," added the Marquis.

Thus it was as one in a dream that Barnabas beheld the legs of the Gentleman in Powder and heard the words:

"Dinner is served, gentlemen!"

But scarcely had they taken their places at the table than the Marquis rose, his brimming glass in his hand.

"Mr. Beverley," said he, bowing, "when Devenden, Slingsby, and I meet at table, it is our invariable custom to drink to one whom we all — hum ——"

"Admire!" said the Viscount, rising.

"Adore!" said the Captain, rising also.

"Therefore, gentlemen," pursued the Marquis, "with our host's permission, we will ——"

"Stay a moment, Jerningham," said the Viscount; "it is only right to tell you that my friend Beverley is one with us in this. He also is a suitor for the hand of Lady Cleone."

"Is he, b'gad!" exclaimed the Captain.

"Dooce take me!" said the Marquis. "Might have known it, though. Ah, well! one more or less makes small difference among so many."

So Barnabas rose, and, lifting his glass with the others, drank to:

"Our Lady Cleone — God bless her!"

CHAPTER XXVII

Barnabas Calls on the Lady Cleone's Brother

HOLBORN was in full song — a rumbling, roaring melody, a clattering, rushing, blaring symphony made up of the grind of wheels upon resounding cobblestones, the thudding beat of horse-hoofs, the tread of countless feet, the shrill note of voices. And amidst it all came Barnabas, eager-eyed, forgetful of his companion, lost to all but the stir and bustle of the wonderful city about him. The which Mr. Smivvle duly remarked from under the curly-brimmed hat, but was uncommonly silent. Indeed, though his hat was at its usual rakish angle, though he swung his cane and strode with all his ordinary devil-may-care swagger, yet Mr. Smivvle himself was unusually pensive, and in his bold black eyes was a look very like anxiety. But in a while, as they turned out of the rush of Holborn Hill, he sighed, threw back his shoulders, and spoke:

"Nearly there now, my dear fellow. I ought, perhaps, to warn you that we may find our friend Barrymaine a trifle — queer — a leetle touched, perhaps." And Mr. Smivvle raised an invisible glass and tossed down its imaginary contents with an expression of much beatitude.

"Is he given to — that sort of thing?"

"Sir," said Mr. Smivvle, "can you blame one who seeks forgetfulness in the flowing bowl —

and my friend Barry has very much to forget — can you blame him?"

"No, poor fellow!"

"Sir, allow me to tell you my friend Barry needs no man's pity — though I confess I could wish Chichester was not quite so generous, in one respect."

"How?"

"In — ah — in keeping the flowing bowl continually brimming, my dear fellow."

"Is Mr. Chichester a friend of his?"

"The only one, with the exception of yours obediently, who has not deserted him in his adversity."

"Why?"

"Because — well, between you and me, my dear fellow, I believe his regard for Barry's half-sister, the Lady Cleone, is largely accountable in Chichester's case; as for myself, because, as I think I mentioned, the hand of a Smivvle once given, sir, is never withdrawn, either on account of plague, poverty, pestilence, or Jews — damn 'em! This way, my dear fellow!" And, turning into Cross Street, up toward Leather Lane, Mr. Smivvle halted at a certain dingy door, opened it, and showed Barnabas into a dingier hall; and so, leading the way up the dingiest stairs in the world, eventually ushered him into a fair-sized, though dingy, room; and, being entered, immediately stood upon tiptoe and laid a finger on his lips.

"Hush! the poor fellow's asleep; but you'll excuse him, I know."

Barnabas nodded, and, softly approaching the couch, looked down upon the sleeper; and, with the look, felt his heart leap.

A young face he saw, delicately featured; a handsome face with disdainful lips that yet drooped in pitiful weariness, a face which, for all its youth, was marred by the indelible trace of fierce, ungoverned passions. And, gazing down upon these features, so dissimilar in expression, yet so strangely like in their beauty and lofty pride, Barnabas felt his heart leap — because of the long lashes that curled so black against the waxen pallor of the cheek; for in that moment he almost seemed to be back in the green morning freshness of Annesley Wood, and upon his lips there breathed a name — "Cleone."

But all at once the sleeper stirred, frowned, and started up with a bitter imprecation upon his lips that ended in a vacant stare.

"Why, Barry," cried Mr. Smivvle, leaning over him, "my dear boy, did we disturb you?"

"Ah, Dig, is that you? Fell asleep — brandy, perhaps, and — ha, your pardon, sir!" And Ronald Barrymaine rose somewhat unsteadily, and, folding his threadbare dressing-gown about him, bowed, and so stood facing Barnabas, a little drunk and very stately.

"This is my friend Beverley, of whom I told you," Mr. Smivvle hastened to explain; "Mr. Barnabas Beverley — Mr. Ronald Barrymaine!"

"You are — welcome, sir," said Mr. Barrymaine, speaking with elaborate care, as if to make quite sure of his utterance. "Pray be seated, Mr. Beverley. We — we are a little crowded, I f-fear. Move those boots off the chair, Dig. Indeed, my apartment might be a little more com-modious, but it's all I have at p-present, and by heaven!" he cried, suddenly fierce, "I shouldn't have even this but for Dig here! Dig's the only f-friend I have in the world — except Chichester. Push that brandy over, Dig. Of course there's — Cleone, but she's only a sister, after all. Don't know what I should do if it wasn't for Dig — d-do I, Dig? And Chichester, of course. Give Mr. Bev'ley a chair, Dig; I'll get him — glass!" Hereupon Mr. Smivvle hurried forward with a chair, which, like all the rest of the furniture, had long ago seen its best days; during which manoeuver he contrived to whisper hurriedly:

"Poor Barry's decidedly 'touched' to-day — a little more so than usual; but you'll excuse him, I know, my dear fellow. Hush!" For Barrymaine, who had crossed to the other end of the room, now returned and came towards them, swaying a little, and with a glass in his hand.

"It's ricketty, sir, you'll notice," said he, nodding. "I — I mean that chair — dev'lish ricketty, like everything else 'bout here — especially myself — eh, Dig? B-but don't be alarmed; it — will bear you, sir. D-devil of a place to ask — gentleman to sit down in — but the Spanswick hasn't been round to clean the place this week. S-scarcely blame her, though — never gets paid — except when Dig remembers it. Don't know what I should do without Dig. Raised twenty pounds yesterday — damme if I know where; said it was watch — but watch went weeks ago. Couldn't even pay the Spanswick. That's the accursed part of it — pay, pay! Debt on debt, and — n-nothing to pay with. All swallowed up by that merciless bloodsucker— that ——"

"Now, Barry!" Mr. Smivvle expostulated, "my dear boy ——"

"He's a cursed v-vampire, I tell you!" retorted Barrymaine, his pale cheeks suddenly flushed and his dark eyes flashing in swift passion. "He's a snake!"

"Now, my dear fellow, calm yourself."

"Calm myself! How can I, when everything I have is his — when everything I g-get belongs

to him before — curse him! — even before I get it! I tell you, Dig, he's — he's draining my life away — drop by drop. He's g-got me down with his foot on my neck — crushing me into the mud. I say, he's stamping me down into hell — damn him!"

"Restrain yourself, Barry, my dear boy; remember, Mr. Beverley is our guest."

"Restrain myself — yes, Dig, yes. B-beg Mr. Bev'ley's pardon for me, Dig. Not myself to-day, but must restrain myself — certainly. Give me some more brandy — ha! and pass bottle to Mr. Bev'ley, Dig. No, sir? Ah, well — help yourself, Dig. Must forgive exhibition of feeling, sir. But I always do get carried away when I remember that — that inhuman monster — curse him!"

"Sir," said Barnabas, "whom do you mean?"

"Mean? Ha, ha! Oh damme, hark to that, Dig! Dev'lish witty, I call that. Whom do I mean? Why," cried Barrymaine, starting up from the couch, "whom should I mean but Gaunt! Gaunt! Gaunt!" And he shook his clenched fists passionately in the air. Then, as suddenly, he turned upon Barnabas with a wild, despairing gesture, and, stretching out his arms, pointed to each wrist in turn. "D'ye see 'em?" he cried. "D'ye hear 'em jangle? No? Ah, but they *are* there! Rivetted on — never to come off, eating deeper into my flesh every day! I'm shackled, I tell you,— fettered hand and foot,— and must drag my chain until I f-fall into a debtor's grave ——"

"No!" cried Barnabas, so suddenly that Ronald Barrymaine started, and thereafter grew very high and haughty.

"Sir," said he, with upflung head, "I don't permit my word to be — to be — contra-dicted. Though you see before you a m-miserable wretch, yet that wretch is still a gentleman at heart, and that wretch tells you again he's shackled, sir, hand and foot — yes, damme, and so I am!"

"Well, then," said Barnabas, "why not free yourself?"

Ronald Barrymaine sank down upon the couch, looked at Barnabas, looked at Smivvle, drained his glass, and shook his head.

"My dear Dig," said he, "your friend's either mad or drunk — mos' probably drunk. Yes, that's it. Or else he's smoking me; and I won't be smoked — no man shall laugh at me, now that I'm down. Show him the door, Dig. I — I won't have my private affairs discussed by s-strangers — no, by heaven!"

"Now, Barry," exclaimed Mr. Smivvle, "do be calm. Mr. Beverley only wants to help you — er, that is, in a friendly way, of course — and I'm sure ——"

"Damn his help — I'd rather die in the g-gutter than ask help or charity of any one ——"

"Yes, yes; of course, my dear fellow! But you're so touchy, Barry — so infernally proud, my dear boy. Mr. Beverley merely wishes to ——"

"Be honoured with your friendship," said Barnabas, with his ingenuous smile.

"Why, then, Dig," said his youthful mightiness, beginning to relent, "pray beg Mr. Bev'ley's pardon for me, and 'sure him the honour is mine."

"And I would have you trust me also," Barnabas pursued.

"Trust you?" repeated Barrymaine, with a sudden laugh. "'Gad, yes, willingly! Only it happens I've n-nothing left to trust you with; no, not enough to pay the Spanswick."

"And yet, if you will, you may be free," said Barnabas the persistent.

"Free! He's at it again, Dig."

"Believe me, it is my earnest desire to help you — to ——"

"Help me, sir! A stranger! No! A stranger, damme!

"Let us say — your friend ——"

"I tell you, sir," said Barrymaine, starting up unsteadily, "I seek no man's aid — s-scorn it! I'm not one to weep out my misfortunes to strangers. I'm man enough to manage my own affairs — what's left of 'em. I want nobody's accursed pity, either — pah!" And he made a gesture of repudiation so fierce that he staggered, and recovered himself only by clutching at Mr. Smivvle's ready arm. "The past, sir," said he, supporting himself by that trusty arm, "the past is done with, and the f-future I'll face alone — as I have done all along — eh, Dig?"

"But, surely ——"

"Aye, surely, sir. I'm no object of charity whining for alms, no, by gad! I — I'm — Dig, push the brandy!"

"If you would but listen," Barnabas began again.

"Not — not a word; why should I? Past's dead, and damn the future. Dig, pass the brandy."

"And I tell you," said Barnabas, "that in the future is hope and the chance of a new life, once you are free of Gaunt."

"Free of Gaunt! Hark to that, Dig. Must be dev'lish drunk to talk such cursed f-folly! Why, I tell you again," he cried, in rising passion, "that I couldn't get free of Gaunt's talons even if I had the money — and mine's all gone long ago, and half Cleone's beside — her guardian's tied up the rest; she can't touch another

penny without his consent, damn him! So I'm done. The future? In the future is a debtor's prison that opens for me whenever Jasper Gaunt says the word. Hope? There can be no hope for me till Jasper Gaunt's dead and shrieking in hell fire ——"

"But your debts shall be paid — if you will."

"Paid? Who — who's to pay 'em?"

"I will."

"You! You?"

"Yes," nodded Barnabas — "on a condition."

Ronald Barrymaine sank back upon the couch, staring at Barnabas with eyes wide and with parted lips; leaned suddenly forward, sobered by surprise.

"Ah-h!" said he slowly. "I think I begin — to understand. You have seen my — my sister."

"Yes."

"Do you know — how much I owe?"

"No; but I'll pay it — on a condition."

"A condition?" For a long moment the passionate dark eyes met and questioned the steady grey; then Barrymaine's long lashes fluttered and fell.

"Of course it would be a loan; I — I'd pay you back," he muttered.

"At your own convenience."

"And — you would advance the money — at once?"

"On a condition!"

Once again their eyes met, and once again Barrymaine's drooped; his fingers clenched and unclenched themselves; he stirred restlessly.

"And your condition — is it — Cleone?"

"No!" said Barnabas vehemently.

"Then — what is it?"

"That from this hour you give up brandy and Mr. Chichester — both evil things."

"Well, and what more? What for yourself? How can this benefit you? Come, speak out; what is your real motive?"

"The hope that you may some day be worthy of your sister's love ——"

"Worthy, sir!" exclaimed Barrymaine, flushing angrily. "Poverty is no crime!"

"No; but there remain brandy and Mr. Chichester."

"Ha! would you insult my friend?"

"Impossible. You have no friends — unless it be Mr. Smivvle, here."

"Now, by heaven," began Barrymaine passionately, "I tell you ——"

"And I tell you that these are my only conditions," said Barnabas. "Accept them and you may begin a new life. It is in your power to become the man you might be, to regain the place in men's esteem that you have lost, for, if you are but sufficiently determined, nothing is impossible."

Now, as he spoke, Barnabas beheld Barrymaine's drooping head uplifted, his curving back grew straight, and a new light sprang into his eyes.

"A new life!" he muttered. "To come back to it all — to outface them all after their cursed sneers and slights! Are you sure you don't promise too much? Are you sure it's not too late?"

"Sure and certain!" said Barnabas. "But, remember, the chance of salvation rests only with and by yourself, after all,"— and he pointed to the half-emptied bottle. "Do you agree to my conditions?"

"Yes — yes, by heaven, I do!"

"Then, friend, give me your hand. To-day I go to see Jasper Gaunt."

So Ronald Barrymaine, standing square upon his feet, gave Barnabas his hand. But even in that moment Barnabas was conscious that the door had opened softly behind him, saw the light fade out of Barrymaine's eyes, felt the hand grow soft and lax, and, turning about, beheld Mr. Chichester smiling at them from the threshold.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THERE was a moment of strained silence; then, as Barnabas sank back on the ricketty chair, Mr. Chichester laughed softly and stepped into the room.

"Salvation, was it, and a new life?" he enquired. "Are you the one to be saved, Ronald, or Smivvle here, or both?"

Ronald Barrymaine was dumb. His eyes sought the floor, and his pale cheek became all at once suffused with a burning, vivid scarlet.

"I couldn't help but overhear as I came upstairs," pursued Mr. Chichester pleasantly, "and devilish dark stairs they are."

"Though excellent for eavesdropping, it appears!" added Barnabas.

"What?" cried Barrymaine, starting up. "Listening, were you — spying on me! Is that your game, Chichester?"

But hereupon Mr. Smivvle started forward.

"Now, my dear Barry," he remonstrated, "be calm!"

"Calm? I tell you, nobody's going to spy on me — no, by heaven! Neither you, nor Chichester, nor the d-devil himself!"

"Certainly not, my dear fellow," answered Mr. Smivvle, drawing Barrymaine's clenched fist through his arm and holding it there. "Nobody wants to. And as for you, Chichester,

couldn't come at a better time. Let me introduce our friend Mr. Beverley ——"

"Thank you, Smivvle, but we've met before," said Mr. Chichester drily. "Last time he posed as Rustic Virtue in homespun; to-day, it seems, he is the Good Samaritan in a flowered waistcoat very anxiously bent on saving some one or other — conditionally, of course!"

"And what the devil has it to do with you?" cried Barrymaine passionately.

"Nothing, my dear boy — nothing in the world, except that until to-day you have been my friend and have honoured me with your confidence."

"Yes, by heaven! So I have — utterly — utterly. And what I haven't told you — y-you've found out for yourself — though God knows how. N-not that I've anything to f-fear — not I!"

"Of course not," smiled Mr. Chichester; "I am — your friend, Ronald, and I think you will always remember that." Mr. Chichester's tone was soothing, and the pat he bestowed upon Barrymaine's drooping shoulders was gentle as a caress; yet Barrymaine flinched and drew away, and the hand he stretched out towards the bottle was trembling all at once.

"Yes," Mr. Chichester repeated, more softly than before; "yes, I am your friend, Ronald; you must always remember that — and, indeed, I — fancy — you always will."

So saying, Mr. Chichester patted the drooping shoulder again, and turned to lay aside his hat and cane. Barrymaine was silent, but into his eyes had crept a look — such a look as Barnabas had never seen — such a look as Barnabas could never afterwards forget; then Barrymaine stooped to reach for the bottle.

"Well," said he, without looking up again, "suppose you are my friend; what then?"

"Why, then, my dear fellow, hearing you are to be saved,— on a condition,— I am, naturally enough, anxious to know what that condition may be."

"Sir," said Barnabas, "let me hasten to set your anxiety at rest; my condition is merely that Mr. Barrymaine gives up two evil things — namely, brandy and yourself."

And now there fell a silence so utter that Barnabas could distinctly hear the tick of Natty Bell's great watch in his fob — a silence in which Mr. Smivvle stared with wide-eyed dismay, while Barrymaine sat motionless with his glass half way to his lips. Then Mr. Chichester laughed again; but the scar glowed upon his pallid cheek, and the lurking demon peeped out of his narrowed eyes.

"And for this," said he, shaking his head in gentle disbelief, "for this our young Good Samaritan is positively eager to pay twenty thousand odd pounds ——"

"As a loan," muttered Barrymaine. "It would be only a loan, and I — I should be free of Jasper Gaunt f-for good and all — damn him!"

"Let us rather say you would try a change of masters ——"

"Now, by heaven, Chichester!"

"Ah!— ah, to be sure, Ronald — our young Good Samaritan, having purchased the brother, would naturally expect the sister ——"

"Have a c-care, Chichester, I say!"

"The sister to be grateful, my dear boy. Pah! don't you see it, Ronald? A sprat to catch a whale! The brother saved, the sister's gratitude gained — oh, most disinterested young Good Samaritan!"

"Ha! I never thought of that!" cried Barrymaine, turning upon Barnabas. "Is it Cleone — is it? Is it?"

"No," said Barnabas, folding his arms, a little ostentatiously. "I seek only to be your friend in this."

"Friend!" exclaimed Mr. Chichester, laughing again. "Friend, Ronald? Nay, let us rather say your guardian angel in cords and Hessians."

"Since you condescend to mention my boots, sir," said Barnabas, growing polite, "may I humbly beg you to notice that, in spite of their polish and tassels, they are as strong, as serviceable for kicking purposes, as those I wore when we last — sat at table together."

Mr. Chichester's iron self-control wavered for a moment, his brows twitched together, and he turned upon Barnabas with a threatening gesture; but, reading the purpose in the calm eye and smiling lip of Barnabas, he restrained himself; yet, seeming aware of the glowing mark upon his cheek, he turned suddenly and, coming to the dingy casement, stood with his back to the room, staring down into the dingy street. Then Barnabas leaned forward and laid his hand upon Barrymaine's, and it so happened it was the hand that yet held the slopping wine-glass.

"Think — think!" said Barnabas earnestly. "Once you are free of Gaunt, life will begin afresh for you; you can hold up your head again ——"

"Though never in London, Ronald, I fear," added Mr. Chichester over his shoulder.

"Once free of Gaunt, you may attain to higher things than you ever did," said Barnabas.

"Unless the dead past should happen to come to life again and find a voice some day," added Mr. Chichester over his shoulder.

"No, no!" said Barnabas, feeling the quiver of the finger within his own. "I tell you, it

would mean a new beginning — a new life — a new ending for you ——"

"And for Cleone!" added Mr. Chichester over his shoulder. "Our young disinterested Good Samaritan knows she is too proud to permit a stranger to shoulder her brother's responsibilities ——"

"Proud, eh?" cried Barrymaine, leaping up in sudden boyish passion. "Well, aren't I proud? Did you ever know me anything else — did you?"

"Never, my dear Ronald," cried Mr. Chichester, turning at last. "You are unfortunate, but you have always met disaster — so far — with the fortitude of a gentleman, scorning your detractors and — abominating charity."

"Ch-charity! Damn you, Chichester, d'ye think I — I'd accept any man's ch-charity? D'you think I'd ever drag Cleone to that depth — do you?"

"Never, Barrymaine — never, I swear."

"Why, then, leave me alone; I can m-manage my own affairs."

"Perfectly, my dear fellow; I am sure of it."

"Then, sir," said Barnabas, rising, "seeing it really is no concern of yours, after all, suppose you cease to trouble yourself any further in the matter, and allow Mr. Barrymaine to choose for himself ——"

"I — I have decided!" cried Barrymaine. "And I tell you ——"

"Wait!" said Barnabas.

"Speak!" said Mr. Chichester.

"Wait!" repeated Barnabas. "Mr. Chichester is — going, I think. Let us wait until we are alone." Then, bowing to Mr. Chichester, Barnabas opened the door wide. "Sir," said he, "may I venture to suggest that your presence is — not at all necessary?"

"Ah!" said Mr. Chichester, "you will certainly compel me to kill you some day."

"'Sufficient unto the day,' sir," Barnabas retorted; "in the meantime, I shall most certainly give myself the pleasure of kicking you downstairs unless you choose to walk — at once."

As he spoke, Barnabas took a stride towards Mr. Chichester's rigid figure; but in that moment Barrymaine snatched up the bottle and sprang between them.

"Ah! — would you?" he cried. "Who are you, to order my f-friends about — and in m-my own place, too! Ha! did you think you could buy me, d-did you? Did you think I — I'd sacrifice my sister — did you? Ha! Drunk, am I? Well, I'm sober enough to — to 'venge my honour and hers. By heaven, I'll kill you! Ah, let go, Dig! Let go, I say! Didn't you hear? Tempt me with his cursed money, will he! Oh, let go my arm! Damn him, I say — I'll kill him!"

But, as he struck, Mr. Smivvle caught his wrist, the bottle crashed splintering to the floor, and they were locked in a fierce grapple.

"Beverley — my dear fellow — go!" panted Mr. Smivvle. "Must forgive — poor Barry. Not himself. Go — go; I can — manage him. Now, Barry, do be calm! Go, my dear fellow — leave him to me — go!"

So, perforce, Barnabas turned away and went down the dingy stairs, and in his ears was the echo of the boy's drunken ravings and Mr. Chichester's soft laughter. And presently, being come into the dingy street, Barnabas paused to look up at the dingy house, and looking sighed.

"She said it would be 'difficult, and dangerous, perhaps,'" said he to himself, "and, indeed, I think she was right."

Then he turned and went upon his way, heavy-footed and chin on breast. On he went, plunged in gloomy abstraction, turning corners at random, lost to all but the problem he had set himself, which was this:

How he might save Ronald Barrymaine in spite of Ronald Barrymaine.

CHAPTER XXIX

Which Describes Some of the Evils of Vindictiveness

BARNABAS stumbled suddenly, dropped his cane, saw his hat spin through the air and roll on before him, staggered sideways, was brought up by a wall, and, turning, found three men about him — evil-faced men whose every move and look held a menace. A darting hand snatched at his fob-seals; but Barnabas smote swift and hard, and the three were reduced, for the moment, to two. Thus, with his back to the wall, stood Barnabas, fists clenched, grim of mouth, and with eyes quick and bright; wherefore, beholding him in this posture, his assailants hesitated. But the diamonds sparkled at them from his cravat, the bunch of seals gleamed at them from his fob, and, the fallen man having risen, albeit unsteadily, they began to close in upon him. Then, all at once, even as he poised himself to meet their rush, a distant voice uttered a sharp warning cry, whereat the three, spattering curses, incontinently took to their heels, and were gone with a thud of flying feet.

For a moment Barnabas stood dazed by the suddenness of it all; then, stooping to recover hat and cane, glanced about, and saw that he was in a dirty, narrow street, or rather alley. Now up this alley a man was approaching very

deliberately, for as he came he appeared to be perusing a small book. He was a short, broad-shouldered man, a mild-faced man of a sober habit of dress, with a broad-brimmed hat upon his head and a remarkably nobbly stick beneath his arm. Being come up with Barnabas, he stopped, closed his book upon his finger, touched the broad brim of his hat, and looked at Barnabas, or, to be exact, at the third left-hand button of his coat.

"Anything stole, sir?" he enquired hopefully.

"No," answered Barnabas; "no, I think not."

"Ah, then you won't be wantin' to mek a charge ag'in' 'em, sir?"

"No; besides, they've escaped."

"Escaped — Lord, no, sir; they've only run ayay — I can allus put my 'ooks on 'em. I spotted 'em, d'ye see. And I know 'em — Lord love you!— like a feyther! They vas Bunty Fagan, Dancin' James, an' Vistlin' Dick — two buzmen an' a prig."

"What do you mean?" enquired Barnabas, beginning to eye the man askance, for all his obtrusive mildness.

"I means two pickpockets and a thief, sir. It vas Vistlin' Dick as you give such a leveller to — a rare pretty knockdown, I vill say, sir — never saw a cleaner. Oh! they're a bad lot, they are, 'specially Vistlin' Dick, an' it's lucky for you as I 'appened to come this vay."

"Why, do you mean to say," said Barnabas, staring at the mild-faced man, "do you want me to believe that it was the sight of you that sent them running?"

"Vell, there veren't nobody else to, as I could see, sir," said the man, with a gentle smile and a shake of the head. "Volks ain't partial to me in these yere parts, and as to them three, they're a bad lot, they are. But Vistlin' Dick's the vorst. Mark my vords, 'e'll come to be topped yet."

"What do you mean by 'topped'?"

"Vy, I means scragged, sir," answered the man, his roving eye glancing continually up and down the alley. "I means 'anged, sir. Lord love you, it's in 'is face. Never see a more promising mug. Consequent, I've got Vistlin' Dick down in my little book 'ere, along vith a lot of other promising vuns."

"But why in your book?"

"Vell, d'ye see, I keeps a record of all the likely coves — capital coves, as you might call 'em"— here the mild man jerked his head convulsively to one side, rolled up his eyes, and protruded his tongue, all in hideous pantomime, and was immediately his placid self again.

"Ah!— you mean — hanged?" said Barnabas.

"As ever vas, sir — capital punishment. And I goes round reg'lar jest to keep a eye on my capital coves. Lord! I vatches over 'em all — like a feyther. Theer's some volks as collects books, an' some volks as collects picters an' old coins; but I collects capital coves — names and faces. The faces I keeps 'ere," and he tapped his placid forehead; "the names I keeps 'ere," and he tapped the little book. "It's my trade, d'ye see, and, though there's better trades, still there's trades as is vorse, an' that's summat, ain't it?"

"And what might your trade be?" enquired Barnabas, as they walked on together along the narrow alley.

"Vell, sir, I'm vat they calls a bashaw of the pigs, but I'm more than that."

"Pray," said Barnabas, "what do you mean?"

For answer the man smiled and half drew from his pocket a short staff surmounted by a crown.

"Ah!" said Barnabas. "A Bow Street runner?"

"And my name is Shrig, sir — Jasper Shrig. You'll have heard it afore, o' course?"

"No!" said Barnabas.

Mr. Shrig seemed placidly surprised, and vented a gentle sigh.

"It's pretty vell known in London, sir, though it ain't a pretty name, I'll allow. Ye-es, I've 'eard prettier; but then, it's better than a good many, and that's summat, ain't it? And then, as I said afore, it's pretty vell known."

"How so?"

"Vell, sir, there be some as 'as a leanin' to one branch o' the profession, and some to another. Now, mine's murders."

"Murders?" said Barnabas, staring.

"Vith a werry big M, sir. Vy, Lord love you, there's been more murderers took and 'topped' through me than any o' the other traps in London. It's a nat'ral gift vith me. Ye see, I collects 'em — afore the fact, as ye might say. I can smell 'em out, feel 'em out, taste 'em out; it's jest a nat'ral gift."

"But — how? What do you mean?"

"I means as I'll be valking along a street, say, looking at every face as I pass. Vell, all at once I'll spot a cove or covess vith vat I calls a capital mug; I'll follow that cove or covess, and, by 'ook or by crook, I'll find out that there cove or covess' name, and — down it goes in my little book, d'ye see?" And he tapped the little book again.

"But, surely," said Barnabas, "surely they don't all prove to be murderers?"

"Vell, no, sir; that's hardly to be expected. Ye see, some on 'em wanishes away, an' some goes an' dies. But they mostly turns out true capitals — if I only vaits for 'em long enough, and — up they goes."

"And are you always on the lookout for such faces?"

"Yes, sir — ven I ain't busy on some case. A man must 'ave some little relaxation, and that's mine. Lord love you, sir, scarcely a day goes by that I don't spot one or two. I calls 'em my children; an' a werry large an' a werry mixed lot they are, too! Rich an' poor — men an' women — rolling in their coaches an' crawling along the kennel. Aha! if you could look into my little reader an' see the names o' some o' my most promisin' children, they'd as-tonish you. I've been to 'ave a look at a couple of 'em this mornin'. Aha! it would a-maze you if you could look into my little reader."

"I should like to," said Barnabas, eyeing the small, shabby book with a new interest. But Mr. Shrig only blinked his wide, innocent eyes, and, slipping the book into his pocket, led the way round a sudden corner into another alley, narrower than the last, and, if possible, dirtier.

"Where are we going?" Barnabas demanded. For Mr. Shrig, though always placid, had suddenly taken on an air that was almost alert; his bright, roving eye wandered more than ever, and he appeared to be hearkening to distant sounds. "Where are we going?" repeated Barnabas.

"Gray's Inn is 'andiest, sir, and I must ask you to step out a bit. They're a rough crowd as lives 'ereabouts — scamps an' bunters, didlers an' clyfakers. So I must ask you to step out a bit; this is bad country for me."

"Bad for you? Why?"

"On account o' windictiveness, sir!"

"Of what?"

"Windictiveness — windictiveness in every shape an' form, but brick-ends mostly, with a occasional chimbley-pot."

"I'm afraid I don't understand," Barnabas began.

"Vell, then," explained Mr. Shrig, as they strode along, "I were the means o' four coves bein' topped, d'ye see, — 'ighvay robbery vith wiolence, — 'bout a month ago: used to live round 'ere, they did, an' their famblies an' friends is windictive against me accordingly — an' werry nat'ral, too, for 'uman natur' is only 'uman natur', ain't it? Werry good, then. Now their windictiveness — or, as you might say, 'uman natur' — generally takes the shape of chimbley-pots and brick-ends, though I 'ave met windictiveness in the form o' b'iling vater and flat-irons, not to mention saucepans an' sich, afore now, and vunce a arm-cheer; all of vich is apt to vorry you a bit until you gets used to it. Then, there's knives — knives is allays awk-ard, and bludgeons ain't to be sneezed at, neither. But, Lord! — every perfession and trade 'as its drawbacks, an' there's a sight o' comfort in that, ain't there?"

Now, all this time the eyes of Mr. Shrig were roving here, wandering there, now apparently glancing up at the strip of sky between the dingy housetops, now down at the cobbles beneath their feet; also, Barnabas noticed that his step, all at once, grew slower and more deliberate, as one who hesitates, uncertain whether he shall go on or turn back. It was after one of those swift, upward glances that Mr. Shrig stopped all at once, seized Barnabas by the middle, and dragged him into an adjacent doorway, as something crashed down and splintered within a yard of them.

"What now? What is it?" cried Barnabas.

"Windictiveness!" sighed Mr. Shrig, shaking his head at the missile. "A piece o' coping-stone, thirty pound if a ounce. Lord! Keep flat ag'in' the door, sir, same as me — they may try another. I don't think so; still, they may, so keep close ag'in' the door. A particular narrer shave, I calls it!" nodded Mr. Shrig. "Shook ye a bit, sir?"

"Yes," said Barnabas, wiping his brow.

"Ah, well, it shook me — and I'm used to windictiveness. A brick, now," he mused, his eyes wandering again, — "a brick I could ha' took kinder; bricks an' sich I'm prepared for; but coping-stones — Lord love me!"

"But a brick would have killed you just the same."

"Killed me? A brick? Oh, no, sir!"

"But if it had hit you on the head ——"

"On the 'at, sir — the 'at; or, as you might say, the castor — this, sir," said Mr. Shrig; and, glancing furtively up and down the gloomy alley, he took off the broad-brimmed hat. "Just run your ogles over this 'ere castor o' mine, an' you'll understand, perhaps."

"It's very heavy," said Barnabas as he took the hat.

"Ah, it is a bit 'eavyish, sir. Peep inside of it."

"Why," exclaimed Barnabas, "it's lined with ——"

"Iron, sir. My own inwention ag'in' windictiveness in the shape o' bricks an' bludgeons, an' werry useful an' comfortin' I've found it. But if they're going to begin on me vith coping-stones — vy, Lord!" And Mr. Shrig sighed his gentle sigh, and rubbed his placid brow, and once more covered it with the "inwention." "And now, sir, you've got a pair o' good long legs; can ye use 'em?"

"Use them? Yes — why?"

"Because it's about time as we cut our stick an' run for it."

"What are we to run for?"

"Because they're arter me — nine on 'em; consequent, they're arter you too, d'ye see. There's four on 'em be'ind us, an' five on 'em in front; you can't see 'em, because they're layin' low; and they're bad uns, all, an' they means business."

"What — a fight?"

"As ever vas, sir. I've 'ad my eye on 'em some time. That 'ere coping-stone vas the signal."

"Ha!" said Barnabas, buttoning up his coat.

"Now, are ye ready, sir?"

"Quite!"

"Then keep close be'ind me. Go!" With the word, Mr. Shrig began to run, always keeping close beside the wall; indeed, he ran so fast and was so very nimble that Barnabas had some ado to keep up with him. They had gone but a little distance when five rough-looking fellows started into view farther up the alley, completely blocking their advance; and, by the clatter of feet behind, Barnabas knew that their retreat was cut off, and instinctively he set his teeth and gripped his cane more firmly. But on ran Mr. Shrig, keeping close beside the wall, head low, shoulders back, elbows well in, for all the world as if he intended to hurl himself upon his assailants in some desperate hope of breaking through them. But all at once, like a rabbit into his burrow, he turned short off in mid-career, and vanished down a dark and very narrow entry or passage; and, as Barnabas followed, he heard above the vicious thud of footsteps hoarse cries of anger and disappointment. Half way down the passage, Mr. Shrig halted abruptly and turned, as the first of their pursuers appeared.

"This'll do!" he panted, swinging the nobbly stick in his hand. "Can't come on more nor two at vunce. Be ready vith your stick — at their eyes. Poke at 'em — no 'itting." The rest was drowned in the echoing rush of heavy feet and the boom of hoarse voices. But now, seeing their quarry stand on the defensive, the pursuers checked their advance and their cries sank to growling whispers, until, with a fierce shout, one of their number rushed forward, brandishing a heavy stick; whereupon the others followed, and there, in the echoing dimness, the battle was joined, and waxed furious and grim.

Almost at the first onset the slender cane Barnabas wielded broke short off, and he was borne staggering back, the centre of a panting, close-locked, desperate fray. But in that narrow space his assailants were hampered by their very numbers, and there was small room for bludgeon-play — and Barnabas had his fists.

There came a moment of thudding blows, trampling feet, oaths, cries — and Barnabas was free, staring dazedly at his broken knuckles. He heard a sudden shout, a vicious roar, and the Bow Street runner, dropping the nobbly stick, tottered weakly and fell, strove to rise, was smitten down again; and in that moment Barnabas was astride him. He felt the shock of stinging blows, and, laughing fierce and short, leapt in under the blows, every nerve and muscle braced and quivering; saw a scowling face; smote it away; caught a bony wrist, wrenched the bludgeon from the gripping fingers, struck and parried, and struck again with untiring arm; felt the press thin out before him as his assailants gave back; and so stood panting.

"Run! Run!" whispered Mr. Shrig's voice behind him. "Ve can do it now. Run!"

"No!" panted Barnabas, wiping the blood from his cheek.

"Run!" cried Mr. Shrig again. "There's a place I knows on close by; ve can reach it in a jiff — this vay — run!"

"No!"

"Not run? Then vat vill ye do?"

"Make them!"

"Are ye mad? Ha! — look out!"

Once more the echoing passage roared with the din of conflict, as their assailants rushed again, were checked, smote and were smitten, and fell back howling before the thrust of the nobbly stick and the swing of the heavy bludgeon.

"Now vill ye run?" panted Mr. Shrig, straightening the broad-brimmed hat.

"No!"

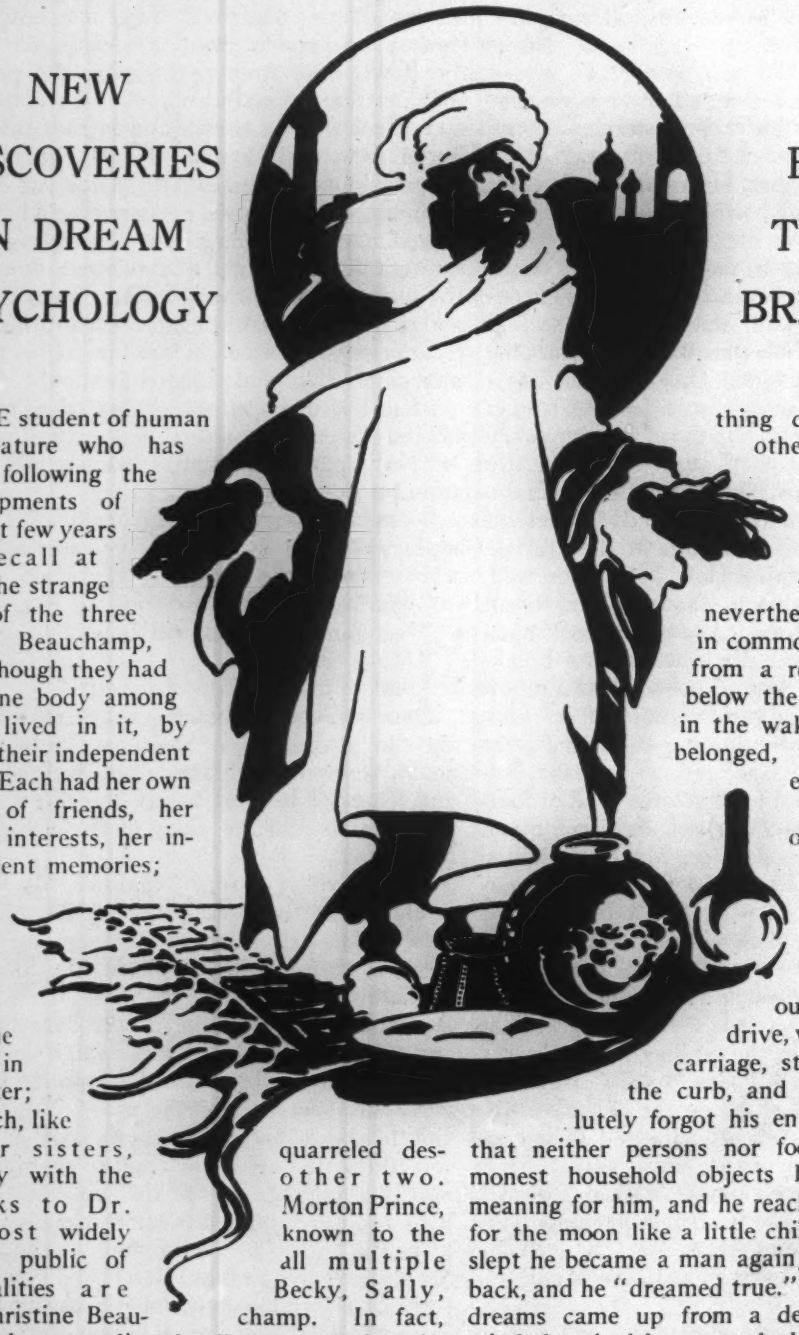
"V'y, then, I vill!" Which Mr. Shrig immediately proceeded to do. But the scowl of Barnabas grew only the blacker, his lips but curled the fiercer, and his fingers tightened their grip upon the bludgeon, as, alone now, he fronted those who remained of the nine. Now, chancing to glance towards a certain spot, he espied something that lay in the angle of the wall, and, swiftly stooping, he picked up Mr. Shrig's little book and slipped it into his pocket. But as he did so he felt a stunning blow, and reeled back, suddenly faint and sick. And now a mist seemed to envelop him; but in the mist were faces above, below, around him, faces to be struck at. But his blows grew weak and ever weaker, the cudgel was torn from his lax grip; he staggered back on stumbling feet, knowing that he could fight no more.

TO BE CONTINUED

DREAMS AND FORGETTING

NEW DISCOVERIES IN DREAM PSYCHOLOGY

BY EDWIN TENNEY BREWSTER



THE student of human nature who has been following the developments of the last few years will recall at once the strange case of the three Misses Beauchamp, who, though they had only one body among them, lived in it, by turns, their independent lives. Each had her own circle of friends, her special interests, her independent memories; each differed markedly from the others in character; and each, like proper sisters, quarreled desperately with the other two. Thanks to Dr. Morton Prince, the most widely known to the general public of all multiple personalities are Becky, Sally, and Christine Beauchamp. In fact, a "double personality play," now on the boards, not only embroiders the familiar incidents, but, in addition, carries the name of one of the sisters in its title.

Familiar, however, as the more bizarre incidents of this strange case have become, it has commonly escaped attention that Becky and Christine Beauchamp, though they knew nothing directly of each other's existence, and used to communicate with each other by leaving written notes on the bureau, had, nevertheless, their dreams in common. These came up from a region of the soul below the level of the split in the waking mind. They belonged, therefore, not to either, but to both.

So, too, with another well-known case, studied by Dr. Boris Sidis. The Reverend Thomas C. Hanna, starting out for an afternoon drive, was flung from his carriage, struck his head on the curb, and at once so absolutely forgot his entire previous life that neither persons nor food nor the commonest household objects had the slightest meaning for him, and he reached out his hands for the moon like a little child. But when he slept he became a man again; his old life came back, and he "dreamed true." Here again, the dreams came up from a deeper level of the mind than had been wrecked by the accident. The dreamer was wiser than the waking man.

One need not multiply examples. Steadily, of late years, expert opinion has been swinging away from the opinion that visions of the night are meaningless phantasmagoria, worthy of attention only from the uncultivated and superstitious. In fact, scientific interest in dreams

begins to recall the good old days when Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, after "seein' things at night," called together "the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans" of his realm, to make known the interpretation thereof, and, by way of stimulating their psychological insight, promised to cut off all their heads if they missed.

The one man who has carried furthest this topographical survey of Dreamland is Sigmund Freud, Extraordinary Professor of Nervous Pathology at the University of Vienna, and probably to-day the most discussed man in his field in the entire scientific world.

In the Underground Galleries of the Mind

The problem, then, is this. Ever since F. W. H. Myers introduced into orthodox science the idea of the "subliminal" consciousness, it has become increasingly clear that there is vastly more to our minds than we have ever suspected. The conscious soul keeps house in a tidy little apartment. With so much, in the course of a lifetime, one gets to be pretty familiar. But underneath the parlors and drawing-rooms of the mind lie cellars and galleries and caverns, full of strange things — dreams and forgotten memories, mediumships and telepathies and doublings of personality, uncouth and primitive impulses, inspirations of genius — nobody yet knows the extent of this subconscious region or what there may be in it.

The earliest access to this strange back side of the mind was by way of hypnotism. But hypnotism, as Freud himself, among others, has pointed out, clears away the rubbish from one small region just outside full consciousness, only to pile it up in a more impenetrable barrier just beyond. Later came into fashion the "hypnoidal state" of Boris Sidis, in which the mind, hanging balanced between waking, sleep, and hypnosis, catches brief but significant glimpses of all three regions at once. Later still came the "association method" of Jung, with which Münsterberg tested the truth of Orchard's confession; a method which, in theory at least, is capable of extracting any piece of information from any man's mind, against either his will or his conscious knowledge. Allied to this last is Freud's device for getting at the deeper parts of the mind by means of the dreams which emerge from them.

A Woman's Secret in a Dream

But to come to particulars. Ernest Jones, M. D., of the University of Toronto, a disciple of Freud's, encountered the following. A woman of thirty-seven, with a husband but no children, dreams that she is sitting in a grand-stand, as if waiting to watch some spectacle. A military band approaches, playing a gay martial air. Behind it comes a funeral train, with the casket resting on a draped gun-carriage. The dead man appears to be a certain Mr. X, a somewhat unimportant person, still alive, whom the dreamer knows in real life only slightly. Behind the dead man follow his brother and his three sisters, all dressed in gay clothing and exhibiting anything but the grief proper to the occasion. The brother, in addition, dances about "like a savage," waving his arms and exhibiting extravagant joy, while a yucca tree with a number of young blossoms on it grows out of his back.

The dream is utterly absurd, just such an absurdity as occurs to any of us any night in the week. But no dream, the Freudians hold, is ever devoid of meaning, if only one can get hold of it at the right end. Most dreams, they maintain, reveal the deepest secrets of the heart.

The woman, therefore, is cross-examined concerning the various single elements of her fantasy. The yucca tree, for example — what does she know about yucca trees? That proves to be simple enough. She has traveled in the West and seen the marriage ceremonies of the Indians, in which the yucca plays a part not very different from that of the orange blossom with us. The natives carry yucca trees in procession, dancing like Mr. X's brother in the dream, while the blossoms of the tree symbolize offspring. Apparently, then, the dream has something to do with marriage and children.

An Example of Scientific Dream Interpretation

Next it transpires that the dreamer herself bitterly regrets having had no children of her own. For this she blames her husband, whose life has been by no means exemplary, and whose addiction to alcohol has ruined both his health and his career, and completely alienated his wife's affection.

Mr. X, too, though but an indifferent acquaintance, turns out to have certain curious resemblances to the dreamer's delinquent husband. Like him, he has a brother and three sisters. Like him, also, he started life with high promise, and fell by the wayside for lack of moral stamina. In short, the two men are so far alike that the thought of either would naturally suggest the other, to one who knew both.

But Mr. X is a civilian, who would not be having a military funeral; the husband is an

officer of volunteers, who might. Moreover, though Mr. X really has a wife, she keeps conspicuously out of the dream.

The dream funeral, then, is really that of the dreamer's unloved husband in the guise of Mr. X, who resembles him; while the gay music and the gay clothes symbolize the emotions of the would-be widow. As for the exuberant brother of Mr. X, he is, in real life, a former lover of the dreamer, whom she threw over in a fit of pique, that both have regretted ever since.

So at last the latent meaning of the dream comes out. If her husband should die, nobody would be sorry — least of all herself and Mr. X's brother. The ridiculous dream sums up a whole life tragedy — a tragedy, moreover, some aspects of which the dreamer would never willingly reveal to any human soul.

Our Dreams Are Wishes in Disguise

But why, demands the bewildered skeptic, at this point, if an unhappy wife wants to dream that her sot of a husband is dead, that she is married again and is bringing up the children of a decent man, why doesn't she go ahead and dream it like a sensible woman, instead of trying to conceal a natural desire under a ridiculous symbolism? Because, replies the Freudian, her conscience will not let her. She will not admit, even to herself, that she wants to marry the other man; still less that she wishes that her husband were dead, so that she might. When the idea enters her mind, she puts it down forthwith — down into the unexplored region of the subconscious, and prays that it may never come up again.

Even in sleep, her conscience remains so far awake as to keep any such wicked idea out of her mind. But the "censor," to use the Freudian terminology, is easily deceived — most of us have observed that fact concerning our own consciences, even when wide awake. So the dream wish disguises itself as gay clothes and music, hides the redundant husband under the form of Mr. X, makes yucca blossoms of his children, and marches past the inspector undetected.

A dream, therefore, according to Freud, is a protective device for putting ourselves to sleep. An ardent desire rankles deep down in our mind and keeps us awake. Our conscience refuses to let us act it out, or talk it off our minds, or even to think it off. So we get the idea past the censor as a symbolic dream, and slumber in peace.

Every dream, then, in the Freudian formula, is the more or less disguised fulfilment of a suppressed wish. A middle-aged citizen, a singularly inoffensive person, dreams of being attacked by a swarthy man with a dark mustache who is armed with a number of sharp weapons. They struggle violently, until the dreamer somehow succeeds in wounding his assailant's left hand. Thereupon the latter changes into a fierce dog, which the dreamer finally succeeds in vanquishing by tearing his jaws apart so as to split his head in two.

How People Revenge Themselves in Dreams

The subject, on waking, attempts to analyze his dream in this wise. The dream assailant recalls the appearance of a man whom the dreamer met casually the day before, by name Dr. Charles Stuart. Charles Stuart suggests King Charles I. Thereupon the subject of the dream recalls that Stuart Rankings (notice the pun; they are common in dreams) was the medical practitioner of his family, who died when the subject was nine years old. At once there flashes into his mind a painful experience of his boyhood, long since forgotten, which occurred when he was five. This same Dr. Rankings had roughly extracted two teeth from the terror-stricken lad, whose mouth he had forcibly held open, and the boy in his struggles had bitten the doctor severely in the left hand.

Here, then, are all the elements of the dream except the dog. That, however, proved to be simple. Dr. Rankings was a dog-fancier, and had given his little patient a fine collie to which he became greatly attached. Moreover, the lad had been much impressed by hearing his father speak of the physician as a "gay dog." For thirty years, then, the memory of the childish fright and the wish to be revenged had lain dormant somewhere at the back of this man's mind. It started up because he had met, the day before the dream, a dental surgeon named Charles Stuart.

Or, to take one more illustration, an especially gentle lady who literally "could not hurt a fly" is highly amazed to dream of wringing the neck of a little barking white dog. She has not an enemy in the world — except her sister-in-law, with whom she has just had a violent quarrel, which ended in the subject's showing the other woman the door, with the words, "Get out; I can not endure a biting dog in my house." The sister-in-law is a small person with a singularly white complexion — and the interpretation is obvious.

These three examples serve to illustrate Freud's doctrine. Beyond this, the reader must judge for himself how far his own dreams represent unfulfilled wishes, outgrown or suppressed

as unworkable. Freud and his disciples have thus far analyzed something more than fifty thousand dreams of all types, from the fancies of childhood to the delusions of the insane, and discovered behind every one a highly significant personal experience. In general, in spite of much opposition, expert opinion is swinging toward Freud's side.

Two Dream Warnings of Unhappy Marriage

The simplest of all dreams are those of children. The child wants something by day: at night he dreams that he has it. The dream accomplishes an unfulfilled wish; and always, in the case of little children, a wish of the day before. To be sure, an unwise supper will make the child dream that some heavy body is sitting on his epigastrium. But whether this shall be the fairy of the bedtime story, or the elephant of the afternoon circus, or the boy in the next block, will turn on some experience of the "dream day." He wants to see the fairy, to feed the elephant, to thrash the youthful neighbor; the unfulfilled wish takes advantage of the digestive disturbance to get itself made into a dream.

We adults, as well, base all our dreams on some experience of the dream day. With us, also, some bodily condition helps the dream to get its start. But we adults, unlike children, have a past, and a conscience. Therefore we dream of unsatisfied desires of long ago, and of wishes incompatible with our adult knowledge or our adult morality. We dream that the dead have returned to life again, although we know that they never will. We dream acts, undignified or wicked, which are quite impossible to our waking selves. Always, however, so the Freudians teach, we dream, under some dramatic disguise, concerning something that, either in the past or now, we care a great deal about.

The worst of it is that these same repressed wishes that appear in dreams affect also, most inconveniently, our waking lives. An engaged girl, for example, was continually mislaying absent-mindedly her lover's gifts. Another had the greatest difficulty in remembering her appointments with the dressmaker who was at work on her wedding-gown. Both marriages turned out badly — the couples did not "live happily together forever afterward"; and exploration of the under side of the women's minds showed that both, even during their engagements, had begun to have subconscious misgivings that neither was willing to face. So the repressed wish that they had said "no" instead of "yes" tended to "inhibit" matters related to the distasteful marriage.

How Subconscious Desires Influence Our Mental Acts

It is common experience how much easier it is to mislay a bill than a check. One forgets to mail the letter he did not want to write, to keep the appointment he does not want to keep. He loses track of the days of the week when there is a note coming due at the end, lets slip from his mind the family shopping order which he expects to bungle, fails to see the acquaintance who buttonholes him with tales of the infant prodigy. On the other hand, one is continually mistaking total strangers for people whom he wants to see, and believing pleasant things "that ain't so." Such lapses of the mind are not haphazard, since each is predetermined by some subconscious desire. Whoso does not believe this, let him watch his own mistakes for a week.

Curiously, too, the "unconscious cerebration" that affects our waking acts — like that which wells up in our dreams — is pretty likely to be a survival from childhood. Mr. A, for example (to whom my apologies if he reads this), is a clever and interesting talker, able always more than to hold up his end in a small company. Mr. A also is an amateur actor who faces a theaterful of people with no more embarrassment than when he buys a necktie. Nevertheless, Mr. A can no more get upon his feet and make an after-dinner speech to a dozen people than he can fly. When Mr. A was a lad, he was made to "declaim" in public, just at the age when the normal and instinctive shyness of boyhood was at its worst. Years ago the last detail faded from his memory, yet still the painful experience keeps him dumb.

Mrs. B (again my apologies) has an especially just and kind husband, who assures her over and over again that he regards his professional income as their joint earnings, to which his wife has equal claim with himself. Yet Mrs. B can not bring herself to ask her husband for a single dollar of the money which she also believes to be hers; and the only way that the couple can get on amounts practically to putting the family exchequer in control of the wife and giving the husband an allowance. The woman's husband, I say, is a just man toward his wife in money matters — but her father was not. As a girl, she shared the humiliation which her mother suffered. It is as impossible for her to ask for money as it would be for her to swear.

Mr. C, now middle-aged, likes all kinds of

meat except beef. He visited a slaughter-house, as a boy, when they were killing cows. Mrs. D has a curious repugnance to calling up her husband on the telephone, and invents all sorts of excuses for not doing it. Some painful experience, as yet unidentified, has built up the inhibition. Miss E — unfortunately an hysteric, the other persons are all normal — could not drink, no matter how thirsty she was, and had to live on melons and other watery fruits, because when she was a little girl her governess, whom she especially disliked, let a dog drink out of her glass.

Why One Forgets People's Names

Incidentally, one may note a curious fact, first pointed out, I believe, by Dr. Jones, concerning the recollection of other people's names. It is notorious that certain persons, though their memories are excellent for all other kinds of information, have the greatest difficulty in remembering patronymics. Such persons, Jones remarks, are apt themselves to have either unusual names, or else names that are so very common that they hardly serve to distinguish their possessors. In either case, the man is sensitive concerning his own name, and that feeling tends to block the recollection of other people's.

One need not multiply examples. All intelligent persons have these curious inhibitions, crotchets, and liability to particular error; it is only the stupid and commonplace minds that escape. And the moral is that we shall respect one another's limitations, while we do our best to ignore our own.

Curiously enough, however, when any one of these common vagaries is run down to its source, it commonly becomes greatly weakened or disappears entirely. In fact, this whole Freudian scheme of analyzing inhibitions, dreams, tricks of manner, failures of memory, queernesses of all sorts, arose as a practical device for putting an end to the disturbance. It all began with Breuer of Vienna, who was Freud's master, back in the eighties, and who used to cure hysteria and other nervous troubles by the simple method of letting the patient talk them off.

Case of the Man Who Could Not Write to His Sweetheart

A curious case which has got into the medical journals illustrates an experience that is far commoner than most of us realize. Dr. F is an interne at a hospital where Miss G is a nurse. They see each other daily for a year in the course of their work, the doctor, naturally, always calling his assistant by her last name. By and by — the thing has happened before — the two get to be decidedly good friends. Straightway the physician begins to have difficulty in recalling Miss G's surname, which he has been using freely for twelve months. The better friends they get, the more he can not recall her name. When, finally, they become engaged, he forgets it so completely that for three weeks on end he is quite unable to write her at all, because he can not address the envelops. Recourse to her letters is of no avail, since these are signed by her Christian name only.

In this desperate situation, Dr. F appeals to a Freudian associate to tap the lower strata of his mind and release the inhibited memory. It turns out that Miss G's forename is the same as that of an old boyhood sweetheart, with whom he had been very much in love all through his school days. He had really — such being the way of men — identified the two girls in his mind, and transferred his affections bodily from one to the other. So the memory of the first love blocked the recollection of the second's name.

Childish Love Affairs Color One's Whole Life

The fact is, our childish, long-forgotten affairs of the heart probably have vastly more influence on our adult lives than we commonly suspect. There is not a little reason for thinking that our color preferences, for example, our liking for red rather than blue, or blue rather than red, have been determined by the hair ribbons of small damsels who are probably grandmothers by this time. A liking for particular names has usually this origin, as any one can verify for himself. So, too, has a preference for any particular type of person — tall or short, light or dark, sober or vivacious. But, of course, one falls in love with persons in books also. The normal boy is always in love from infancy onward, except for one short period during early adolescence. His first love, whom he forgets completely, name and all, long before he grows up, probably tints his entire life, and determines in no small degree the woman whom he afterward marries.

But this first love, to come back once more to the Freudian analysis, is really the second. Every proper youth first falls in love with his mother; and she fixes, once for all, the possibilities of his caring for other women. For the rest of his life, he can love only women who remind him of her. It may be in looks or in character, or merely in trick of manner or in

name; but some resemblance there must be to serve as a starting-point. And the same, naturally, is true also of the "father-daughter complex."

The Explanation of Falling in Love

Here, then, we have the explanation of the curious fact — always a matter of common observation and proved of late years by careful statistical studies of Pearson and others — that actual husbands and wives are distinctly more alike than random samples of men and women taken from the same social class. Men are inevitably more or less like their mothers, and they pick out wives who are also like them. The women favor the suitors who suggest subconsciously their fathers. The result is, as Pearson proved, that actual married couples are nearly as much alike, on the average, as are first cousins.

This would explain, also, love at first sight, sudden attachments, and possibly the whole mystery of falling in love at all. Each man of us knows a hundred lovely ladies with whom he might fall in love — only he doesn't do it. Each lady is supposed to have innumerable admirers whom she cruelly scorns. Then suddenly — two people — click! and the thing is done — and usually done far better than any foresight could have planned it.

Perhaps matches are made in heaven. Perhaps, as the Freudians maintain, every person's conjugal fate turns on his parent of the opposite sex. Perhaps the whole thing is only a crazy dream of Dr. Sigmund Freud.

THE PRESIDENTIAL CONVENTION— A BLOT ON AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

BY

ANDREW D. WHITE

EX-PRESIDENT OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY, FORMERLY UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO GERMANY, AND PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN DELEGATION AT THE FIRST HAGUE CONFERENCE

THERE is a problem now before the American people which concerns the fair fame of this republic. It has to do with the relations of Republicanism and Democracy to sane opinion throughout the world. We are called upon to deal with it in view of that consideration to which Thomas Jefferson referred as a reason for presenting to the world the Declaration of Independence: namely, "a decent regard to the opinions of mankind."

The Sane Lincoln Convention

Four times during my life I have been chosen to represent my neighbors at a national convention called to nominate a candidate for the presidency. The first of these conventions was that which renominated Abraham Lincoln, at Baltimore, in 1864. It was held in a theater or opera-house of moderate size. The delegates and their alternates on the floor outnumbered the spectators in the galleries. Any delegate could be heard, and the discussions which took place were not prompted and not interrupted by spectators. There was nothing in it in the nature of a circus or show: it was *discussion* — calm, deliberate, wise, and therefore fruitful in good results. It was directed to the interest of the whole American people, and not to the desire for spectacular effects by a mob crowded into the galleries. I repeat and accentuate this statement: that convention at Baltimore in 1864 was a *deliberative* body.

The next convention of which I was a member assembled at Philadelphia in 1872, and renominated Ulysses S. Grant. This convention also was held in an opera-house of suitable size. Its delegates and alternates outnumbered the spectators. It was therefore a deliberative body. It was conducted by calm and thoughtful men. It tolerated no interference from the galleries. It was impressive, but not spectac-

ular, and its conclusions, like those of the previous convention just named, were approved by the American people.

The Blaine "Wigwam" Convention — a "Show"

The third convention to which I was sent was at Chicago in 1884, and nominated Mr. Blaine. It was held in what was called in those days a "wigwam" and in these a "coliseum." The latter name seemed especially appropriate, for in it fundamental Republican and Democratic principles were butchered to make an American holiday.

For it was not a deliberative body. It was, in the lowest sense of the word, a "show." You doubtless remember Artemus Ward's answer when he was asked regarding his principles. "Principles?" he answered. "I ain't got no principles. I'm in the *show bizzness.*" The delegates on the floor of this convention at Chicago in 1884 were outnumbered more than ten to one by the spectators. For, while there were about a thousand who had been sent there as members and alternates, there were over ten thousand in the galleries. The result was that it was not a deliberative body. Not more than two or three of the really important speeches were heard beyond the platform. As a rule the talk that was heard was by eminent "fog-horns"— men of more lungs than brains.

The newspapers spoke of the doings as "dramatic." That was a slander against the drama in any decent form. The proceedings, on the whole, were farcical. There were acrobatic tricks, clownish tricks, posturing, and ground and lofty political tumbling, stimulated by the galleries. The galleries themselves assumed an important part, and at times a leading part. I myself saw elegantly dressed men and women yelling, screaming, whooping, hissing speakers on the floor, and at times in hysterics — jumping up and down like peas on a hot shovel. I saw also various delegations trooping around the room, waving sticks and flags, making themselves and their country ridiculous. The childish character of such performances has recently attracted the attention of that eminent philosopher, Mr. Dooley. In describing the proceedings of the recent Republican and Democratic conventions to his friend Mr. Hennessey, he remarked, in regard to the trooping of delegates about the room in order to elicit the applause of the galleries: "And then, Hinnissey, the honorable diligates began a game of ring-around-the-rosy." Mr. Dooley, in saying this, penetrated profoundly the whole subject.

The Contempt of Foreigners

It had, indeed, become mere child's play. Distinguished visitors from other countries also looked on, and it was only their politeness that concealed their contempt for these proceedings, which disgraced both Republicanism and Democracy.

It was evident that the interests of the millions of voters outside the convention were not thought of: the main object of interest was the galleries. Then, too, came the yelling at the mention of candidates, for half an hour at a time — and it appears that this has now been increased, under the fostering influence of the galleries, to very nearly, if not quite, an hour. One important result of all this was that most of the best speakers could not be heard. Another result was that, instead of reports of the really important committees and speeches by thoughtful delegates, on candidates, resolutions, lines of policy, and claims of different portions of the Union, the space in the newspaper reports was largely sacrificed to accounts, more or less comically embellished, of the doings of the galleries and the effects of these doings on the convention generally.

Do you call this Democratic or Republican rule? I deny it. The ten thousand of the swell mob of Chicago and adjacent towns was a barrier between the convention and the people. This mob in the galleries evidently considered that their rights to "see the show" were paramount to the rights of the American people to be represented in a well-ordered, deliberative convention. The gallery mob, indeed, alleged, as the papers at the time declared, that very many of them had paid well for their seats, some of them, indeed, according to the same authority, twenty, thirty, fifty, and even a hundred dollars. What they wanted, what they considered they had a right to, was a *show,* — in the nature of a *circus,*— and in this they insisted on taking part. The result was that the rights of ninety millions of thoughtful American people, outside the convention, were usurped by a mob largely from the purlieus of a great city, seeking a new form, and a very low form, of amusement. The evolution of this idea was clear. On the last night of the Chicago convention in 1884, when came the nomination for Vice-President, a mob largely of roughs was allowed to take possession of galleries near the platform, seizing in many cases the seats reserved for the ticket-holders, and there this packed mob applauded those who favored the Chicago local candidate for the second place on the ticket, and hissed all those who did not.

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